MERRY TALES for CHILDREN

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

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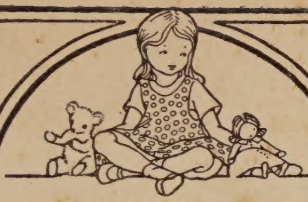

MERRY TALES *for* CHILDREN

Best Stories of Humor for Boys and Girls

By

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

1928

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Every child loves to laugh, and the good "funny" story is not only the child's right but his need.

There has been little humor available heretofore for children in the short story form, except the questionable buffoonery and adult wit of the old folk and fairy tales in their original versions. The collection of humorous stories which follows supplies, not only entertainment for boys and girls, but each of its pages carries a hidden lesson made permanent in the child's heart through the fine, sure philosophy of laughter.

I have drawn upon practically every source, old and modern, for the best in child humor. Each story has been selected and adapted for its effect upon a child's happiness and upon his conduct. The stories are classified under the important headings of those child interests which, properly fed, influence his future life.

The book is offered, to all who believe in education by story-telling, as an assembling of the best comedies of childhood than which there is no surer way of presenting truth.

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.

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THE JOKE

"NOW what would each of you most like to find when we go to our new home?" Father asked, as he drove the last nail in the last packing box. Father had just come home from the army, and had found a place to work and live in another town, smaller, and strange, and a journey's length away.

"Oh, a big market!" Mother said, "where I can buy apples and peas and pumpkins and corn and tomatoes and everything else good to eat that will make rosy cheeks and strong arms for the children."

That was Mother's wish.

"Oh, a boy who lives next door and owns a velocipede and a pair of roller skates and a pushmobile like mine, so we can have races together!"

That was Bob's wish.

"Oh, a toy shop very near so that I can buy

a set of dolls' dishes and a dolls' house and a new doll. I am going to be very lonely when I am away from all the little girls in this neighborhood."

That was Betty's wish.

Then the expressman came and loaded all the family's furniture and dishes and pictures and trunks into his wagon. And Mother and Bob and Betty told Father good-bye, because he was going to join them at the new house just as soon as he could. They boarded the train, and it carried them a long way, and then they stopped at a very small, green town.

Theirs was a tiny little home, set in a country lane that was far away from the town. No one had lived in it for a long time, and the dusty windows looked like sleepy eyes, and the scraggly vines, trying to grow over the little front porch, made Bob think of a stray terrier that needed to have his hair cut. Grass and weeds grew up through the brick wall, and the gate hinge was broken. But the walls of the little home were of warm red brick, and there were swallows twittering under the eaves. The sun made a yellow carpet in the living room, and when the furniture came it fitted in just as if it had always lived there.

"Such a surprise, children!" Mother said

as soon as they were settled enough to look around. "There is an apple tree in the yard and a garden where I can plant peas and pumpkins and corn and tomatoes and everything else that we need. We will go to work digging tomorrow."

"Such a surprise, Mother!" Bob said that afternoon. "The gate is open, you know, because it is broken and in came such a nice boy just now. He lives a little way down the lane with his mother, for his father didn't come home from the army. He hasn't much to play with, but I am going to let him take my velocipede while I ride my pushmobile."

"Such a surprise, Bob!" Betty said soon after that. "There is a sunny corner of the garden wall that makes a real outdoor dolls' house, large enough for my old dolls. Some of the dishes broke when we moved, and Mother says I may have them to play house with."

So the whole family was very busy and very happy. The new home had trimmed vines and shining windows. The swallows finished building their nests, and the garden was planted and began growing, and one day Father came.

"How do you like it?" was the first thing

he asked after he had been hugged and kissed, and then hugged and kissed again.

"We love it!" they said with one breath, and all together.

Father pretended to frown and look very serious. "Oh, no, you are not in earnest; you have made a mistake," he said.

"No, we are in earnest. We haven't made a mistake," the family said all at once.

"Oh, yes, you have," Father repeated. "Our new house is a long way from a market. Bob's friends are boys who have very few toys, and there isn't a toy shop within miles for Betty."

None of the family said a word for a moment. They looked at the little green sprouts in the garden and heard the boy from down the lane laughing because he was having such a good time with Bob's velocipede. They saw the old dolls looking as good as new out in the playhouse in the garden wall.

"Isn't it a joke?" the family said then, Mother and Bob and Betty all laughing as hard as they could. "We forgot all about the things we thought we must have here!"

TOMMY'S LION

"THE people who live on the next place to ours have a tame lion," Tommy said the first evening after the Barnes family had really finished settling enough to sit down together after supper. "I saw it come in a team this afternoon."

Everybody looked at Tommy in amazement. Mother was the first one to speak, for she always wanted to make things easier for Tommy if she could. "The people next door have such a large place that they could keep a lion if they wanted to. That is what you mean, isn't it, Tommy?" she asked hopefully.

"No, I saw the lion come," Tommy said.

Father looked very sternly over his eyeglasses at Tommy. "This is what comes of your reading so many of those wild animal stories, Thomas," he said. "We all know that you mean to be truthful, but your imagination runs away with you. Don't speak of the lion next door again."

"All right, Father, I won't," Tommy said obediently.

Tommy kept his word, but the next day at luncheon, Lucy, Tommy's little sister, surprised the whole family by saying suddenly, "The lion next door is going to have a big piece of meat for his luncheon today."

"Why, Lucy, I never would have thought this of you, dear," Mother said. "What ever makes you tell such a story as that?"

"Why, I saw the butcher's cart stop at the back gate, and the next door cook came out to get the meat," Lucy explained. "Then she took most of it to the kitchen, but she gave a piece of beef to the chauffeur, and he carried it out to the barn to the lion."

No one spoke for a moment, and then Father looked very sternly at Tommy. "This comes of your reading those wild animal stories to your sister, Thomas," he said. "Don't do it any more."

"All right, Father, I won't," Tommy said, and then everyone forgot about the lion for the rest of the day. When it came bedtime, though, and little Billy was tucked up in his crib, the family heard a terrible noise coming from the nursery. Mother ran upstairs, very much alarmed, for although little Billy was only three and a half years old, he never made any sound after the lights were put out at

night unless he was ill. She found him perfectly safe.

"Billy, why did you make that kind of roaring noise just now?" Mother asked.

"That is what the lion next door does when he wants some attention," little Billy said.

"Dear me!" Mother thought, after she had given Billy a drink of water and closed the nursery door. "I don't believe that I will say anything to Father about this, for he would think that Tommy and Lucy have been telling Billy those wild animal stories. I must think of something to do about it myself. It can't go on like this."

The children started going to the new school the next day, and there was so much to do after settling the playroom that they did not see very much of Mother. At supper, though, the family was together, and Mother had a funny twinkle in her eyes. She waited until Father had served every one and had helped himself to plenty of chicken stew, and the children had their biscuits nicely buttered. Then she surprised them all by saying,

"The lion next door is quite harmless, for he is lame."

"Mother, you're telling a story!" Tom said.

"Oh, Mother!" Lucy exclaimed.

And, "Oh, Mother!" little Billy said too.

Father couldn't, of course, look at Mother over his eye-glasses, or sternly, or tell her not to read about wild animals, but he got up from his place and went over to feel of her head. "I am afraid that the moving and settling were too much for you, my dear," he said.

But Mother's eyes only twinkled more brightly as she said, "No indeed, Father," and went out to the kitchen for more biscuits.

After supper it was a beautiful evening, and even little Billy sat by the window to see the moon come up. Father had gone out right after he had finished his chicken, but he came back before the children's bedtime. His face was all wrinkled with smiles, and the first thing he said after he came in was, "Mighty clever neighbors we have. The man bought a lion for ten dollars."

No one said anything. They thought they would let Father explain, which he did.

"The Park Zoo in town felt the high cost of living," he said, "and they had to have an auction to try and get rid of some of the animals. It was easy enough to sell Angora goats, and monkeys, and popular small animals like that, but nobody wanted a lame old

lion. Mr. Purdy, our neighbor, happened in, and he couldn't bear to have him killed. So what did he do but bid ten dollars for him, and he was the only bidder. He's going to give the lion a good time in his old age."

"I saw him come home," Tommy said importantly.

"I saw him get his luncheon," Lucy said.

"Hear me roar like him," little Billy said with a terrible noise.

"I saw him limping about the grounds on a long rope this afternoon," Mother added. "I was watching across the wall."

"Fine neighbors, and a fine, honest family at home," Father said, although no one could ever have doubted it. And then the family laughed very hard, for the joke was, just a little, on Father.

THE TALE OF THE TIGER

ONCE upon a time, in a country far away from here, there was a boy who had a yellow striped Tiger with green eyes given him for his eighth birthday. It was a toy Tiger on wheels and its striped coat was made of yellow cloth and its green eyes were made of glass.

It could growl loudly if the boy pulled its head down, but it never moved or made a sound of its own accord.

The morning of his birthday the Boy built a large, strong cage of blocks for his toy Tiger and then he put on his cap and his coat and went out in his yard to play.

His Friend came up the street just then and stopped at the Boy's gate. The Boy leaned over the gate and, looking back in a make-believe, scared way toward his front door, said in a whisper:

"I have a Tiger in my house. A tiger could eat you up!"

"Dear me!" said his Friend, "I don't think I will come in and play. I have to go right home."

And with that the Friend hurried back to his own house, although he had really come to make a birthday call and had a red top with gilt markings in his pocket to give to the Boy.

"Ha, ha! That was a good joke!" the Boy chuckled to himself and then he forgot all about it.

But the tale of the Tiger went on.

The Boy's Friend went into his kitchen as soon as he reached home where the cook was making gingerbread. Between bites he told her about it.

"A Boy up the street has a Tiger in his house," he said. "It could eat us up!"

"Dear me!" said the Cook, almost dropping the second pan of gingerbread. When she went to the back door to let the Ice Man in, she told the tale of the Tiger, but she did not repeat it just as it had come to her, because she was a little deaf.

"Up the street there's a Tiger in a yard," the Cook warned the Ice Man. "It will eat us up if something isn't done to stop it."

"Dear me!" said the Ice Man, hurrying out to the street and rattling his ice tongs to attract the attention of a policeman, for the tale of the Tiger was to go on and on.

"Here's work for you," the Ice Man called

to the Policeman. "Up the street there are Tigers in a yard and they're likely to eat up the whole town." The Ice Man thought he was repeating the story just as the Cook had told it to him, but he had been too excited to get it straight.

"Dear me!" said the Policeman, starting toward the station house and considering on the way. "That's a great danger to this town. Those Tigers must have got loose on their way to the Zoo, but we haven't any ropes or cages in the police department." So when the Policeman reached the station house he telephoned to the Fire Chief. He intended to tell the real tale of the Tiger, but the telephone connection was poor and this is what the Fire Chief heard:

"Up the street there are Tigers in a yard and they'll soon be eating up the whole town!"

"Dear me!" the Fire Chief answered. "I'll start right away with the hose, the hook and ladder and plenty of rope. You had better come too."

Near dinner time the Boy took a handful of grass in to feed the Toy Tiger in his cage up in the playroom. Then he made the Tiger growl loudly. The day was warm and the windows were open so the sound of the Tiger's

growl went down the street to the place where a great company was waiting.

"That's the Tiger! This way; hurry!" the crowd shouted.

Up the street galloped the fire company. On came some policemen with clubs. Back of them came the Cook with a rolling pin, and the Boy's Friend, without the top, for he had decided to keep it. They all stopped in front of the Boy's home.

When they found no Tiger eating up people in the yard, only a Toy Tiger that the Boy's mother showed them at the window of the playroom, they were very much put out about all this unnecessary trouble.

The Boy was so ashamed that he stayed in the house all the rest of the day, and the Tiger looked at him with its green glass eyes. They had a new wise look as if the tiger was telling the Boy that any tale, even a true one, may change as it travels.

THE GOOSE, THE PIG, AND THE SCARECROW

ONCE upon a time, in the days when your grandfather was a boy, and almost every one lived on a farm, there were three little boys named Hiram, John, and Charlie who lived, too, on a farm. And each of these brothers was afraid of—no, not bears, or thunder, or work, or anything like that. No; Hiram, and John, and Charlie were afraid of the minister!

There was really no reason why they should have been afraid of the minister, for he had never done a single thing to them. They saw him every Sunday in the big pulpit in the meeting house, and after church was over he stood at the door and shook hands with the congregation. He had a buggy and a white horse to take him around among the farms calling, but he had never as yet called at the boys' house. They were so afraid of him that they hoped he never would come.

One pleasant day in the summer, Hiram came in with a large basket of eggs he had just found in the nests in the barn and when he

gave them to his mother, she exclaimed, "Oh, Hiram, I am so glad to have those eggs, for I want to make a sponge cake. The minister is coming to tea."

Just then, John, and Charlie came in the kitchen and their mother spoke to them about it. "John," she said, "I wish you would try to get the cows home as early as you can to-night, for I want you to help wait on table. And Charlie, you run right over to your Aunt Susan's and ask her if I can borrow her gold and white china cake plate. The minister is coming to tea!"

The three little boys did not say a word, but they all went out and sat down behind the wood pile. They looked at each other, and tried to think of something to do. They were afraid to sit down at table with the minister. They were afraid to shake hands with the minister. They were afraid to be anywhere around when he came. The whole truth of the matter was that Hiram, and John, and Charlie were bashful, only they did not know it.

"We will have to run away!" said Hiram.

"Yes, we will have to run away!" said John.

"Oh, yes, we will have to run away!" said Charlie.

So these three little boys, who had never done such a thing in their lives before, ran away. They ran away from the minister, and they ran so fast that they went in different directions. Each thought only of himself; it did not matter to him where his brothers went.

Their mother was very busy all the afternoon making sponge cake, and baking ham, and getting preserves up from the cellar, and the best gold banded china down from the china closet shelves. Before she had time to miss them, the boys were safely hidden, and the minister came.

He tied his horse just like anyone else, and rubbed his hands when he saw the company tea table. Mother asked him if he would ask a blessing and he said he would as soon as all the family were there. So they waited, but the little boys did not come. Mother decided at last that Hiram and John and Charlie were all bringing home the cows and were having trouble, so at last the minister asked a blessing without them. Then he complimented mother on her fine supper, and the family and he ate it.

After supper the minister said that he would like to go around the farm. And Father said that he would particularly like to

have him see a prize goose. "She is nesting just now," Father told the minister, "in an empty cask out in the barnyard. She has her own ideas about nesting, but she will let us look at her."

The minister said that he would be delighted to see the prize goose, so he went out to the barnyard with Father, but the cask was not there. There was a mark in the mud of the barnyard as if it had rolled, and Father was very much excited. "Who has taken my prize goose?" he said as he and the minister followed the track of the barrel.

They followed the track where the barnyard sloped toward the duck pond, and there, stuck in the mud of the pond, near the bank, was the cask. Father, with the minister's help, pulled it to shore. "A fine, fat goose, she is so heavy," said the minister. But out of the cask came Hiram. The goose had left her nest, and he had hid in the cask. But he had wriggled too much in it, and sent it rolling into the pond.

Father was very much ashamed, but he decided to wait and settle the matter later. "Would you like to see my prize pig?" he asked the minister, and the minister said that he would.

The pig pen was only a step from the pond, and Hiram went along with them, for he did not know what else to do. "This pig took a prize at the spring fair," Father said, "the one over there in the corner." But instead of a pig, out from the corner of the pig pen crawled John, very muddy and ashamed.

The minister put on his spectacles, and used his handkerchief to keep from laughing. "A prize pig!" was all he said as John followed them away from the pig pen, not knowing what else to do.

Father was so ashamed that he hardly knew what to say, but at last he asked the minister if he would like to go over to the corn field. "I have a big crop of corn this year," he told him. So they went over toward the field.

"I have had a lot of trouble with crows," Father said, "I have thought of trying to set up some new kind of scarecrow." But just as he said that, they saw a scarecrow on the fence. It was Charlie, hanging there by his torn clothes. He was all scratched up, his cap torn, and his trousers caught by nails where he had tried to get over the fence and run away. Charlie was the youngest one, and poor at climbing high rail fences.

"I will settle this later," Father said as he

lifted Charlie down, but the minister put his hand on Father's arm. "Wait a minute," he said, and then he looked at the three boys. He knew why they had run away, for they looked bashful. "It is settled," the minister said, "We have here a goose, a pig, and a scarecrow." Then he laughed. How the minister did laugh! Father laughed, and the boys laughed, and that was all there was to it, except that Hiram, and John, and Charlie were never afraid of the minister after that.

CAROLINE'S DOUGH-CAKE

ONCE upon a time, when your grandmother was a little girl, there was a white house with tall pillars and green blinds that stood on the edge of the village common. And in the house there lived a little girl named Caroline. And Caroline had a great-aunt Patience who lived in the country.

One morning in the spring the milkman, riding in from the country, brought a message to Caroline. "Your Aunt Patience is making dough-cake today," the milkman said, "and she sent word to say that she would like you to come and take tea with her."

Almost any little girl would have loved that invitation, for dough-cake was ever so good. It was made of the lightest kind of bread dough, sweetened with brown sugar, stuffed with raisins, marked in a pattern with a fork, and baked a light brown color. But Caroline was not pleased.

"If Aunt Patience were only baking sponge-cake, or fruit-cake, or pound-cake, or frosted gingerbread," she sighed, "how much nicer it

would be." And she frowned when her mother dressed her in her yellow muslin frock with the ruffles. And she scowled when she saw the hired man drive up to the stepping stone at the end of the driveway for her. And she hardly smiled at all when her little old Aunt Patience welcomed her at the little old farmhouse where she lived in the country.

There were three of them at tea; Caroline, Aunt Patience, and Toby, Aunt Patience's pug dog, who always sat in a high chair at table, wearing a bib, and behaving very well. It was a pretty tea, thin slices of cold ham, creamy potatoes, hot biscuits, golden apple sauce, and thick slices of the warm dough-cake. Toby had bread and milk in a china bowl and lapped it without spilling. Caroline should have enjoyed her tea, but she was a rather spoiled little girl about cake.

Caroline did not think that dough-cake was *cake*. She wanted sponge cake, or fruit-cake, or pound-cake, or frosted gingerbread. There are little girls like that now, in some places.

Aunt Patience thought that Caroline was ill when she refused a large piece of the plummy dough-cake cut in the shape of a piece of pie. Then she had an idea. "You've eaten so

much beside, Caroline," she said, "that you have lost your appetite. I know what to do." And she hurried out to the kitchen, for the hired man had just driven up to the door to take Caroline home. "Here is a nice little dough-cake for you to take home," she told Caroline, bringing it in neatly wrapped up in a white napkin with red fringe." You can eat it for your tea tomorrow," she said.

"Thank you, Aunt Patience," Caroline said, holding the dough-cake as she stepped up into the buggy. But she was not thinking *thank you* in her heart. She really did not want that nice, little round loaf of dough-cake. What do you think she did with it?

When they had driven into Aunt Patience's woods where it was dusk-dark and still, Caroline leaned out of the buggy. When the hired man was not looking, she threw the dough-cake out at the side of the road!

Not far from Caroline's house there was a little red farmhouse where her friend, John, lived. John used to stop for Caroline in the morning and carry her books to school. There was almost a spring freshet for a few days, so there was no school. But the sun came out at last and the two started one morning for the schoolhouse.

"Let's come home the long way by the woods, Caroline," John said. "There's something by an oak stump that I want to show you. I saw it last night when I was bringing home the cows. It is a kind of giant toad-stool, the biggest one I ever saw."

"Oh!" said Caroline, "maybe it is for a fairy party table."

School seemed very long that day, and by the time John and Caroline started home they were both hungry. "I wish I had some of my Aunt Patience's dough-cake with raisins. I did have a dough-cake not long ago," Caroline said.

"And ate it up, I suppose. Pig!" laughed John. Caroline did not say anything. Just then they entered the woods and John spoke. "I hope it's not gone," he said. "No, there it is right by the side of the road. I couldn't stop to look at it much last night, but did you ever see so fat and high a—why-y!" John stopped at what he saw.

Caroline did not speak either, for there, beside the giant toad-stool that seemed to have raised itself beside the road, was Aunt Patience in her shawl and bonnet. Beside Aunt Patience was Toby with a draggled white napkin with red fringe in his mouth. Toby

seemed very much excited. He was pawing all around the toad-stool. It was not a toad-stool.

It was the nice, little round dough-cake swelled and swelled by the rain and its yeast inside!

"I was so afraid that something had happened to you," Aunt Patience said, "when Toby came home this afternoon with the napkin. He would have me follow him here."

"Why, here is the dough-cake Caroline said she wished she had," John said at last, "she must have lost it," and his eyes twinkled. So did Aunt Patience's eyes twinkle. "How it did rise!" she said. And Toby shook and shook the napkin, and pawed and pawed the dough-cake. He was the only one who didn't understand that not a sponge-cake, or a fruit-cake, or a pound-cake, or a frosted gingerbread loaf could have done what that dough-cake had for Caroline.

She never forgot it, and it is a true story for Caroline *was* Grandmother.

LITTLE ROAST PIG

MARY ELLEN thought that never, even when the country fair was held in the green country from which she and all the family had just come, had she ever seen anything so wonderful as the big city market.

It was a great red brick building, and it stood not so very far from the great yellow brick building, on the top floor of which Mary Ellen and all the family now lived. The very first day after they were settled Mother, with a large basket, and Mary Ellen, with a little basket, went over to the city market to buy some food.

Oh, and there they saw the Butter-and-Eggs man, dressed all in white, who stood behind a toy-size farm house and served his customers with pats of yellow butter and even with combs of dripping golden honey. The Fruit-and-Vegetables man, with a gay red handkerchief tied about his neck, stood among piles of apples and oranges and heads of lettuce and red beets and green peas and beans.

There was a Baker man and an Oyster man.

The entire market was draped gaily with festoons of colored paper and greens. Before she realized it, Mary Ellen was separated in the crowd from Mother, but she did not wait to be frightened because she was lost. She had stopped in front of the Butcher man's counter, and there she sorrowfully read a sign:

"Roasting Pigs For Sale."

Then Mary Ellen laughed, for she heard a merry little squeal. There, in a crate under the Butcher man's counter, was a small pink pig. He might easily have been one of the small pink pigs from the big pig-pen at Mary Ellen's farm in the country. She bent over Little Roast Pig and gave him a rosy apple from her market basket. Then she opened her very own beaded purse that hung from a chain on her arm and counted the money in it. Mary Ellen did not really need to count the money in the beaded purse, for she knew exactly how much there was. She always carried the purse when she went out, so as to be sure that all that money which she had been saving in it for ever so long was safe. There was two dollars, in four shining fifty cent pieces, and Mary Ellen was going to put it in a bank as soon as she and Mother found

one near them in the city. But now she had changed her mind. She spoke bravely to the Butcher man:

"Would you sell Little Roast Pig before he is roasted for four bright fifty cent pieces?" Mary Ellen asked.

The Butcher man stopped weighing strings of sausages and looked down at Mary Ellen. She stood in front of him in her country, blue calico dress, and her country hat with a mended rim and faded ribbons, but wearing the sunniest country smile that he had ever seen.

"I don't think that he wants to be roasted," she went on, "I have all that money, and I will pay it to you for him."

"Well, that is a fair bargain," the Butcher man said, "all your money for a pig that I don't want to keep. I've been thinking just that myself about him, that he wouldn't relish being roasted. He is here only to advertise and there is plenty of business without him. All day long he squeals like that as if he wanted to go home with the children. Here you are," and the Butcher man opened the crate, and set the little pig up on the counter.

Mary Ellen counted out her four bright fifty cent pieces and laid them beside him there on

the counter. She was just going to lift him off when the Butcher man had a kind thought. He pulled down some of his red tissue paper festoons and made a ruffled collar for Little Roast Pig, like the ruffs that lords and ladies used to wear.

"There you are," he said, and he put the pig into Mary Ellen's tender arms.

When Mary Ellen discovered that she had strayed away from Mother, she very sensibly went straight home, for she had remembered the way. Mother did not come for quite a long while, and shortly after she did come, Aunt Jane arrived with the dear baby for whom she had been caring until the family should be quite all settled and ready for him. And before they knew it, it was bed time.

That night, when there were no sounds in the city except the whistling of the tug boats on the river, and when everyone in the great yellow apartment house was asleep, a strange noise awoke the other families who lived on the top floor near Mary Ellen's family. It awoke Mary Ellen and her family also. It was a strange kind of squealing noise and it seemed to come from the high roof.

"Burglars!" everyone cried and they all, including the janitor and Mary Ellen and

Mother and Father, went out into the hall to listen. There it came again, that strange sound. It was a series of squeals.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mary Ellen, "that must be Little Roast Pig crying for his supper. I am afraid that I forgot to feed him."

"Little Roast Pig?" they all asked.

"Yes," Mary Ellen explained. "A tiny, tiny alive pink pig that I bought at the market with all my money, for I thought that he would rather be bought that way, all nice and wriggly. And when I came home, I put him up on the roof in a packing box for a pen."

How everyone laughed, and then each family found something for the little pig's supper!

In the morning, Mother went over to the market to see if Mary Ellen had paid enough to the Butcher man, and to explain how she had loved all the animals in the country. It was too much, the Butcher man said, and he sent back two of the bright fifty cent pieces to go in the bank. And the best part of it was that Little Roast Pig lived there on the roof of the apartment house, and was a Little Pet Pig.

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM

AN old Clock, that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen without giving any trouble, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped.

Upon this, the Dial-plate changed countenance with alarm, the Hands tried to keep on moving, the Wheels stood still with surprise, and the Weights hung speechless. Each member felt like laying the blame on the others.

At length the Dial started a formal inquiry into the cause of the stop, when the Hands, Wheels, Weights, and all with one voice proclaimed their innocence. But at last a faint sound came from the Pendulum, who spoke:

"I must confess myself to be the sole cause of the present stop, and am willing to give my reasons. The truth is, that I am tired of ticking."

Upon this, the old Clock became so enraged that it was on the point of striking.

"Lazy Wire!" exclaimed the Dial-plate.

"As to that," replied the Pendulum, "it is vastly easy for you, Mistress Dial, who have always, as everybody knows, set yourself above me—it is vastly easy for you, I say, to accuse other people of laziness—you who have nothing to do all your life but stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself watching all that goes on in the kitchen. Think, I beg you, how you would like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and wag backward and forward, year in and year out, as I do!"

"As to that," replied the Dial, "is there not a window in your house on purpose for you to look through?"

"And what of that?" asked the Pendulum, "Although there is a window, I dare not stop, even for an instant, to look out. Besides, I am tired of my life, and I will tell you the reason why. This morning I happened to be counting how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty four hours—can any one of you tell me the number?"

The Minute-hand, being quick at figures, instantly replied, "Eighty-six thousand, four hundred times."

"Exactly so," replied the Pendulum, "well, I ask you all if the thought is not enough to

fatigue one? And when I began to multiply the strokes of one day by those of weeks, months, and years, no wonder I grew discouraged! So, after thinking it over, I said to myself, 'I'll just stop!' "

The Dial could scarcely keep her countenance, but said at last, "Dear Mr. Pendulum, I am really astonished that such a useful, industrious person as yourself should have been overcome by this thought. You have done a great deal of work in your time. So have we all, and are likely to do. And though this may tire us to *think* of, the question is, will it tire us to *do?* Will you be so good as to give about half a dozen strokes to illustrate what I mean?"

The Pendulum was willing and ticked six times at its usual pace.

"Now," went on the Dial, "did that wear you out? Was it very fatiguing to you?"

"Not in the least," said the Pendulum. "I am not thinking of six strokes, but of millions."

"Very good," replied the Dial, "but remember that you don't have to tick a million times, but only once at a time. Whenever you have to swing, the Works will give you a minute to swing in."

"I never thought of that," said the Pendulum. "It quite staggers me."

"Then I hope," said the Dial, "that we may all return to our duty, for the farmer's family will lie in bed until noon if we stand idling here."

So the Weights, who had never been guilty of any light conduct, used all their influence to swing the Pendulum. The Wheels began to turn, the Hands to move, and the Pendulum swung. It ticked as loudly as it ever had. While a beam of the rising sun that streamed in through a hole in the kitchen shutter, shone full upon the Dial and made it brighten up as if nothing had happened.

When the farmer came down to breakfast, he said, looking at the Clock, that his watch had gained half an hour in the night.

THE MATCHES

THERE was once a bundle of Matches, and these Matches were very proud of their high descent. Their genealogical tree, that is to say, the great fir tree of which each of them was a splinter, had been a great old tree out in a forest. The Matches now lay between a Tinder-Box and an old iron Pot; and they were telling about the days of their youth.

"Yes, when we were upon the green boughs," they said, "then we were really upon the green boughs! Every morning there was diamond tea for us, made of dew. We had sunshine all day long, whenever the sun shone, and all the little birds had to tell us stories. We could see very well that we were rich, for the other trees were well dressed only in summer, while our family had the means to dress in green in the winter as well.

"But then the woodcutter came, like a great revolution, and our family was broken up. The head of the family got an appointment as mainmast on a first rate ship, which could sail

round the world if necessary. The other branches all went to other places, and now we have the office of kindling a light for the vulgar herd. That's how we happen to be in the kitchen."

"My fate was of a different kind," said the Pot which stood next to the Matches. "From the beginning, ever since I came into the world, there has been a great deal of scouring and cooking done in me. I look after the practical part, and am the first here in the kitchen. My greatest pleasure is to sit in my place after dinner, very clean and neat, and to talk sensibly with my friends. But, except the Water-Pot, which is sometimes taken down into the courtyard, we always live here, within our four walls.

"Our only news monger is the Market-Basket, and he speaks very uneasily about affairs out in the world. Yes, the other day, an old pot fell down and burst from fright at the tales of the Market-Basket."

"Now you're talking too much," said the Tinder-Box, and its steel hit the flint until the sparks flew. "Shall we not have a merry evening?"

"Yes, let us talk about who is the grandest," said the Matches.

"No, I do not like to talk about myself," said the Pot. "Let us get up an evening's entertainment. I will tell a story. Once upon a time—"

"What an interesting way you have of telling a story!" interrupted the Carpet Broom.

"Yes, one cannot help but notice that," said the Water-Pot, and it gave a little hop of delight, so that there was a splash upon the floor.

And the Pot went on telling the story, the end of which was as good as the beginning. All the Plates rattled for joy, and the Carpet Broom brought some green parsley out of the dust hole, and put it like a wreath on the Pot, knowing that this would make the others jealous. "If I crown her today, she will crown me tomorrow," the Carpet-Broom thought.

"Now I will dance," said the Fire-Tongs, and she danced. How she could hop! The old Chair Cushion burst to see it. "Shall I be crowned?" wondered the Fire-Tongs, and indeed she was given a wreath of parsley also.

"They're only common people after all," thought the Matches.

Now the Tea-Urn was to sing; but she said that she had taken cold and could not sing unless she felt boiling within. That was only a

notion. She did not want to sing unless she sat in the drawing room with grand people.

In the window sat an old Quill Pen, with which the cook generally wrote. There was nothing remarkable about this pen except that he had been dipped too deeply into the ink, but he was proud of that. "If the Tea-Urn won't sing, she needn't," he said. "Outside hangs a nightingale in a cage and he can sing. He hasn't had any education, but his manners are good."

"I think it very wrong," said the Tea Kettle, who was the kitchen singer, and half brother to the Tea Urn, "that so rich and foreign a bird should be listened to! Is it patriotic? I ask the Market Basket to decide."

"I am vexed," said the Market Basket. "No one can imagine how much I am secretly vexed. Is this a proper way to spend an evening in the kitchen? Would it not be more sensible to put things in order? Let each one go to his own place and I will arrange a game. That would be quite the proper arrangement."

"Yes, let us make a disturbance," they all cried. But just then the door opened, and the maid came in. They all stood still; not one dared to stir. But there was not one pot among them who did not know what he could

do, and how grand he was. "Yes, if I had liked," each one thought, "it would have been a merrier evening."

But the Matches said nothing. They were too proud to speak, for they were so sure that there was no one in the kitchen, or in the whole house who even approached them in grandeur. The servant girl took the Matches to light the fire. How they sputtered, and burst into flame!

"Now every one can see," they said, "how important we are, that we are the first! How we shine! What a light!"

And then the Matches burned out.

THE SHIRT COLLAR

THERE was once a rich gentleman whose whole effects consisted of a Bootjack and a Hair Comb, but he had the finest Shirt Collar in the world, and about this Shirt Collar we will tell a story.

The Collar was now old enough to think of setting up an establishment of his own, and it happened that he was sent to the wash in the company of a Garter.

"My word!" exclaimed the Shirt Collar. "I have never seen anything so slender and delicate, so charming and genteel. May I ask you your name?"

"I shall not tell you," said the Garter.

"Where is your home?" asked the Shirt Collar.

But the Garter would not answer this question either.

"I presume you are a fashionable girdle," said the Shirt Collar. "You look to be useful as well as ornamental, my little lady."

"You are not to speak to me," said the Gar-

ter. "I have not, I am sure, given you any occasion to."

"Oh, when one is as beautiful as you are," cried the Shirt Collar, "that is occasion enough."

"Go!" cried the Garter, "Don't come so near me. You look to me like a monster."

"I am a fine gentleman," said the Shirt Collar. "I own a bootjack and a hair-comb." And this was not true at all, for it was his master who owned these things. The Shirt Collar was only boasting.

"Don't come too near me," the Garter repeated. "I am not used to it." But just then they were taken out of the wash, starched, and hung over a chair in the sunshine. They were next laid on the ironing board, and now came the hot Iron.

"Mrs. Widow," said the Shirt Collar, "little Mrs. Widow, I'm getting too warm. I am being quite changed. I am losing all my creases. You are burning a hole in me. I pray you give up your work and come and keep house for me."

"You old Rag!" said the Iron, and rode proudly on over the Shirt Collar, for she fancied that she was a steam boiler and ought to be out on railroad tracks drawing parlor cars.

"You old Rag!" said the Iron, going right on.

After he was ironed, the Shirt Collar was a little frayed at the edge, so the Scissors came to smooth away the frayed part.

"Ho, ho!" said the Collar, "I presume you are a dancer from the theatre. How well you are able to point your toes! No one in the world, I am positive, could do it as well."

"I know that," replied the Scissors sharply.

"You deserve to be a countess," said the Shirt Collar. "All that I possess consists of a fine gentleman, a bootjack, and a comb. If I only had an estate!"

"What! Do you want to share these with me!" cried the Scissors, and gave such a deep cut that the Collar could never be worn again.

"I shall have to ask the Hair Comb to join me in my housekeeping," thought the Shirt Collar after he had been sent home in this damaged condition. He stood beside her on the dresser, and he spoke to her softly and politely, "How well you have kept your teeth, in spite of your age, little lady. Have you ever thought of having an establishment of your own?"

"I have thought of that," said the Comb. "I am engaged to the Bootjack."

A long time passed, and the Shirt Collar was

put into the sack of a paper-miller. He found himself there in a very ragged company, and the finer ones kept to themselves, and the coarser ones to theirs, which was the right thing to do. They all had much to tell, but the Shirt Collar had the most of all, for he was such a Jack Brag.

"I have been a very great gentleman in my time," said the Shirt Collar. "People would not leave me alone, but I was fine, and starched into the bargain. I had a Bootjack and a Hair Comb that I never used. I shall never forget my dearest friend, a little Girdle, so delicate, so genteel, so charming she was! And this Girdle threw herself into a washing tub, all for me!

"There was an Iron, a widow, who became quite glowing, but I let her stand alone until she became black with despair. And there was a dancer who gave me the wound from which I still suffer—she was very sharp and quick tempered. My own Hair Comb was anxious to set up housekeeping with me, and lost all her teeth because I refused.

"Yes, I have had many experiences of a kind; but I am most sorry for the Garter—I mean for the Girdle, who jumped into the wash tub for me. I have a great deal on my con-

science. Why, here I am turning into paper!"

And to that the Shirt Collar came. All the rags were made into white paper, but the Shirt Collar became the very piece of paper we see here, and upon which this story is printed. And that was done because he boasted so dreadfully about things that were not at all true.

THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER

HAVE you ever seen a very old wooden cupboard, quite black with age, and ornamented with carvings?

Just such a cupboard stood in a parlor. It had been a legacy from the great-grandmother, and was covered from top to bottom with carved roses and tulips. In the middle of the cupboard door an entire figure of a man had been cut. He was certainly ridiculous to look at and he grinned, for you could not call it laughing. He had goat's legs, little horns on his head, and a long beard. The children in the room called him the Billy-goat-legs-Lieutenant - and - Major - General - War - Commander-Sergeant. That was a difficult name to say.

He was always looking at the table under the mirror, for on this table stood a lovely little Shepherdess made of china. Her shoes were gilt. Her dress was neatly caught up with a red rose, and besides this she had a

golden hat and a shepherd's crook. She was very lovely. Close by her stood a little Chimney-Sweeper, black as coal, but made also of porcelain. He was as clean and neat as any man, for it was only make-believe that he was a sweep.

There he stood, very nattily, with his ladder, and with a face as white and pink as a girl's. And that was really a fault, for he ought to have been entirely black. He stood quite close to the Shepherdess, and they were engaged. They suited each other very well. Both were young people, made of the same kind of china, and both equally frail.

Close to them stood another figure three times greater than they. This was an old Chinaman, who could nod. He was also of porcelain, and declared himself to be the grandfather of the little Shepherdess, but he was not able to prove his relationship. Still he said that he had authority over her, and on that account he had nodded to Mr. Billy-goat-legs-Lieutenant - and - Major - General - War-Commander-Sergeant, who wanted to woo her for his wife.

"Then you will get a husband!" said the old Chinaman, "a man who, I verily believe, is made of mahogany. He has a whole cupboard

full of silver plate, beside all that he hoards in the secret drawers."

"I won't go into that dark cupboard," said the little Shepherdess, "I have heard that he has eleven porcelain wives in there."

"Then you will be the twelfth," said the wicked old Chinaman. "This night, so soon as the cupboard creaks, you shall have the wedding, as surely as I am a Chinaman."

And with that he nodded his head and fell asleep. But the little Shepherdess wept, and looked at her loved one, the Chimney-Sweeper.

"I beg of you," she said to him, "that we go out into the wide world, for I can remain here no longer."

"I will do whatever you like," said the Chimney-Sweeper. "Let us start directly. I think that I can support you by sweeping chimneys."

"If I were only safely down the table," she said, but he comforted her. He showed her how she must place her little foot upon the carved corners and the gilded foliage down the leg of the table. He carried his ladder, too, to help her, and they were soon together on the floor. But when they looked up at the old cupboard there was great commotion. The Billy-goat - legs - Lieutenant - and - Major - General-

War-Commander-Sergeant had sprung high up in the air, and called across to the Chinaman, "Now they're running away! They're running away!"

The old Chinaman was awake, and shaking his whole body with anger. He could do this, for below he was all one lump. The little Shepherdess was so frightened that she fell down on one porcelain knee, but she did not crack.

"Have you really the courage to go out into the wide world with me?" asked the Chimney Sweeper, "Have you considered *how* wide the world is, and that we can never come back here again?"

"I have," she replied.

The Chimney Sweeper looked fondly at her, and said, "My way is up the chimney. If you have really the courage to creep through the stove—through the iron fire box—as well as up the pipe, then we can get out into the chimney, and I know how to find my way through there. We will mount so high that they can't catch us, and quite at the top there's a hole that leads out into the world."

And he led her to the door of the stove.

"It looks very black in there," she said, but still she went with him, through the box and

through the pipe, where it was pitch-dark night.

"Now we are in the chimney," he told her at last, "and look, look! Up yonder a beautiful star is shining!"

It was a real star in the real sky, which shone straight down upon them, as if it would show them the way. And they clambered and crept. It was a frightful way, and terribly steep, but he supported her and helped her up. He held her and showed her the best places where she might set her little porcelain feet. Thus they reached the edge of the chimney and sat down, for they were very tired.

The sky with all its stars was high above, and all the roofs of the town deep below them. They looked far around—far, far out into the wide world. The poor little Shepherdess had never thought of it as it really was. She leaned her head against the Chimney-Sweeper, and cried so hard that the gold ran down off her girdle.

"I cannot bear it," she said. "The world is too large! If I were only back on the table underneath the mirror! I shall never be happy until I am there again. Now I have followed you out into the wide world, if you really love me, you will take me home again."

The Chimney-Sweeper spoke sensibly to her —spoke of the terrible old Chinaman, and of the Billy-goat-legs-Lieutenant-and-Major-General-War-Commander-Sergeant. But the little Shepherdess only sobbed more bitterly. So the Chimney-Sweeper could not help but give way to her.

With great danger, they climbed down the chimney again. And they crept back through the pipe and the fire box. That was not pleasant at all. And there they stood in the dark stove; there they listened to hear what was going on in the room.

It seemed very quiet, so, at last, they looked in. There lay the old Chinaman in the middle of the floor! He had fallen down from the table as he was pursuing them, and there he lay, broken in three pieces. His back had come off all in one piece, and his head had rolled way off into a corner. The Billy-goat-legs - Lieutenant - and - Major - General - War-Commander-Sergeant stood where he had always stood, thinking.

"This is sad!" said the little Shepherdess. "The old grandfather has fallen to pieces, and it is all our fault," and she wrung her little china hands.

"He can be mended," said the Chimney-

Sweeper. "If they glue his back and give him a good rivet in his neck, he will be as strong as ever, and may say many a disagreeable thing to us yet." So they climbed back upon the table where they used to stand.

The old Chinaman was really riveted. The family had his back glued, and a large rivet was passed through his neck. He was as good as new, only that he was never able to nod again. So the porcelain people remained together, and they blessed the Chinaman's rivet, and they loved each other until they broke.

THE STORY OF PETER RABBIT

ONCE upon a time there were four little rabbits, and their names were:

Flopsy
Mopsy
Cotton-Tail
and Peter.

They lived with their mother in a sand-bank, underneath the root of a very big fir-tree.

"Now, my dears," said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, "you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden. Your father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor.

"Now run along, and don't get into mischief. I am going out."

Then old Mrs. Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella, and went through the wood to the baker's. She bought a loaf of brown bread and five currant buns.

Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-Tail, who were

good little bunnies, went down the lane to gather blackberries.

But Peter, who was very naughty, ran straight away to Mr. McGregor's garden, and squeezed under the gate.

First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes; and then, feeling rather sick, he went to look for some parsley.

But round the end of a cucumber frame, whom should he meet but Mr. McGregor!

Mr. McGregor was on his hands and knees planting out some young cabbages, but he jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake, and calling out, "Stop, thief!"

Peter was most dreadfully frightened. He rushed all over the garden for he had forgotten the way back to the gate.

He lost one of his shoes among the cabbages, and the other among the potatoes.

After losing them he ran on four legs and went faster, and I think he might have got away altogether if he had not unfortunately run into a gooseberry net, and got caught by the large buttons on his jacket. It was a blue jacket with brass buttons, quite new.

Peter gave himself up for lost, and shed big tears; but his sobs were overheard by some

friendly sparrows who flew to him in great excitement, and implored him to exert himself.

Mr. McGregor came up with a sieve, which he intended to pop upon the top of Peter; but Peter wriggled out just in time, leaving his jacket behind him—

And rushed into the tool-shed and jumped into a can. It would have been a beautiful thing to hide in, if it had not had so much water in it.

Mr. McGregor was quite sure that Peter was somewhere in the tool-shed, perhaps hidden underneath a flower-pot. He began to turn them over carefully, looking under each.

Presently Peter sneezed—"Kerty-shoo!" Mr. McGregor was after him in no time, and tried to put his foot on Peter, who jumped out of a window, upsetting three plants. The window was too small for Mr. McGregor, and he was tired of running after Peter. He went back to his work.

Peter sat down to rest. He was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also he was very damp with sitting in that can.

After a time he began to wander about, going lippity-lippity—not very fast, and looking all around.

He found a door in the wall, but it was locked, and there was no room for a fat little rabbit to squeeze underneath.

An old mouse was running in and out over the stone doorstep, carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood. Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had such a large pea in her mouth that she could not answer. She only shook her head. Peter began to cry.

Then he tried to find his way straight across the garden but he became more and more puzzled. Presently he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water cans.

A white cat was staring at some gold-fish. She sat very, very still but now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. Peter thought it best to go away without speaking to her; he had heard about cats from his cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.

He went back towards the tool-shed, but suddenly, quite close to him, he heard the noise of a hoe—scr-r-ritch—scratch, scratch, scritch. Peter scuttered underneath the bushes. But presently, as nothing happened, he came out, and climbed upon a wheel-barrow, and peeped over. The first thing he saw was Mr. McGregor hoeing onions. His back was turned toward Peter and beyond him was the gate!

Peter got down very quietly off the wheelbarrow, and started running as fast as he could go, along a straight walk between some black currant bushes.

Mr. McGregor caught sight of him at the corner, but Peter did not care. He slipped underneath the gate, and was safe at last in the wood outside the garden.

Mr. McGregor hung up the little jacket and the shoes for a scare-crow to frighten the blackbirds.

Peter never stopped running or looked behind him until he got home to the big fir-tree.

He was so tired that he flopped right down upon the nice soft sand on the floor of the rabbit-hole, and shut his eyes.

His mother was busy cooking; she wondered what he had done with his clothes. It was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight!

I am sorry to say that Peter was not very well during the evening.

His mother put him to bed, and made some camomile tea; and she gave a dose of it to Peter!

"One tablespoonful to be taken at bedtime."

But Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-Tail had bread and milk and blackberries for supper.

HOW MISTER RABBIT GOT A GOOD DINNER

BRER RABBIT he was settin' in his do' wid his chin in his hands, he was. His eyes shet tight, he swingin' hisse'f in de do'-way singin'; "All de time scratchin' and a pickin'! And I can't 's much 's git er piece er fried chicken." He keep up a-sighin'; he keep up a cryin'. He sing:

"Plenty er 'bacca, plenty er greens,
Plenty er pickin' of new scrap-beans!
But all time stealin', all time pickin',
Nairy a wing-bit er fried chicken!"

Des den Brer Rabbit he hear down de road: Trot! Trot! Trot! 'Twas de Preacher-Man.

Oh, yes, ev'y sorter somebody got to have dey preacher. Crow, he preaches for de birds. Dat what de ol' folks useter tell me.

Preacher-Man he have on a high hat, so high! He have on a long coat, so long! He ride on a po' horse, so po'!

"Mornin', Brer Rabbit," says he.

"Mornin', mornin'," says Brer Rabbit, says he. "Whar be you goin' today?"

"I was des gwine down to Sis Susan's house," says de Preacher-Man, "being of a sort of a Fort' Sunday, she'll be lookin' for me, and mo'n dat she do get up de bes' fried chicken dinner as ever was."

Dat des do make Brer Rabbit's mouf water, look mos' like Mister Preacher-Man mought a-knowed what he was studyin' 'bout. He say to hisse'f:

"Dat's de way de world go 'round,
Dat's de way de world go 'round.
All fer dat preacher!
None fer dis creature!"

Den he say sorter solemn:

"Is you heard, is you got de word
From dar since you las' heard?"

"Not since las' Fort'," says de Preacher-Man, lookin' sorter skeered like.

"Is you heard from de chillen?"

"Not edzactly, no-no-o-o-o," says de Preacher-Man.

"Den you ain't heard, is you, dat her chillen is tuck wid hilarious chills, and she done down

wid a terrifus fever, and de servants tuck wid de mumps, and—"

Preacher-Man, he 'gun to look mighty solemn.

"Oho!" says Brer Rabbit. "Dar's lots er news in dis neighborhood. I is learn dat Miss Susan is done sont her las' chicken er de fryin' size up to Mister Snake's funeral, des ten miles up de road. I hear dey gwine ter give him a great funeral, long as dey was so shy er him, when he was livin'. Dey gwine to have big doin's up dar. I wish ter gracious I could be dar, but dey all keep de 'membrance dat me'n him wan't speakin' when he was tuck off so sudden—no mo' was dey—and dey won't give me no invite. But I heard em say dat dey do wisht dat de Preacher-Man could be dar."

All dat time Brer Rabbit talkin', de Preacher-Man he studyin'. D'rectly he say: "A man 'bleeged to go whar he needed mos'."

Rabbit, he laugh behime his hand and say easy:

"Whar de bes' eatin' is,
Dar de bes' needin' is."

Preacher-Man he set his po' horse in de road ag'in and start fer where Brer Rabbit says Mister Snake's funeral is gwine to be.

Den Brer Rabbit he jumped out de do', he do; he clap his heels together, and he lit out fer de spring-branch.

When he git dar, he 'gin to dabble in de wet clay. He pat, and he work wid hit and d'rectly he make hisse'f a tall hat outer dat clay, same like de Preacher-Man's hat. Den he put hit on his head, way down over his years!

Brer Rabbit he do laugh.

He laugh and he work, and he work and he laugh, and he make outer some clay a long coat, same like what de Preacher-Man wo'.

Brer Rabbit he laugh.

Den Brer Rabbit he make hisse'f a pair er saddle-bags outer dat clay.

Den Brer Rabbit he do laugh.

Den he stop laughin', he do, and he say:

"Whoever seed a preacher walkin' down de road?
A hoss he gotter have, ef hit's thin as a boa'd!"

So Brer Rabbit he take up a stick, he do, and he kivver hit wid dat wet clay, twel hit look like a rale, sho 'nough po' hoss.

Brer Rabbit he *do* laugh den!

Brer Rabbit he git on de hoss, fling on de

saddle-bags. Dot hoss won't go. He whip dat hoss. Hoss won't go. Brer Rabbit he won't be out-done. He set his foots on de groun' and off he go holdin' to de bridle rein and jumpin' high—clippity, down de road to Miss Susan's he go. When he git nigh Miss Susan's, all de chillen run tell dey ma: "Mister Preacher-Man comin' and comin' mo swift dan he ever come befo'."

Brer Rabbit, he make like he tie his hoss 'ginst de hitchin' rack, and den he bol'ly walk in.

Miss Susan, she say: "Mornin', mornin'. Walk right in!"

Dat what Brer Rabbit do.

Miss Susan she say: "Take off yer hat, Brer Preacher-Man."

But dat what Brer Rabbit don't 'low to do.

"Hem! Hem! Sister," says he, "scuse me, but er misery in de jaw won't lemme take off dis hat."

"Course, course," says Miss Susan. Den she say: "Brer Preacher-Man, lemme take off dis heavy coat."

Dat skeer Brer Rabbit ag'in, but he say: "Hem! Hem! Sister, a misery in de shoulder blade make me keep on dis coat."

Miss Susan, she say: "Course, course."

Brer Rabbit he hear chickens squalin' in de back-yard and hot lard spittin' on de kitchen fire, so he draw his hat far'r over his years and says: "Hem! Hem!"

De chillen dey gigglin' and pullin' on dey ma's dress. Dey done on close range spy out who Brer Rabbit is. Dey say: "Ma! Ma! Dat ain't no Preacher-Man, des Brer Rabbit!"

Brer Rabbit, he say: "What dem good li'l chillens say?"

Miss Susan, she say: "Dey des talkin' foolishness like chillen does do. Dey say you ain't no Preacher-Man, des Brer Rabbit, de which ev'y-body, nigh or furder, know dat Brer Rabbit is de very worst man in all dis country round."

"Hem! Hem!" says he. "I des now pass Brer Rabbit settin' in his do' lookin' mighty good and gloomiful."

"Time he lookin' gloomiful, ef he ain't good," says Miss Susan, " 'caze he been ca'yin' on scanjulous." Den she lit in to 'buse Brer Rabbit. She 'fuse to say a good word fer him.

Brer Rabbit he egg her on to say much and mo'. He heah dat day all de devilment he ever done in dat settlement and mo' too.

Miss Susan she done set one 'oman ter wring chicken's necks, 'nother ter pick 'em, 'nother

cook 'oman ter fry 'em. De dishes began ter come in hot and fast. Ol' Brer Rabbit he eat much an' mo' dan ten Preacher-men can eat.

Whilst he eatin' Miss Susan she keep a'talkin' 'bout Brer Rabbit's meanness, she do.

Brer Rabbit, he say solemn-like: "I gwine keep membrance of all dis you tell me 'bout Brer Rabbit! I ain't gwine fergit one word all dis you tellin' me." Brer Rabbit, in de mean time, done sop every dish dry, and he might er even got off unbeknownst to Miss Susan, but she done sont de chillen out to water de Preacher-Man's hoss. Chillen hol' de water to dat po' hoss' nose.

Nose melt off!

De chillen set up a gigglement, and keep on waterin' de hoss twel he do all melt—'cept de stick de clay be daubed on. Den dey run inter de table des gigglin' and hollerin', "Yo' hoss done melt to mud!"

Brer Rabbit he don't know what to do; he des keel over like he done faint off.

Den dem chillen dey holler: "He done fall a-faintin'. Po' water on him!" And den dey fetch water faster dan dey ever done befo'. Dey des bodaciously drench Brer Rabbit.

Dar! His tall hat fell off.

Yas! His long coat melt off.

So! His big boots go.

Ho! His great gloves slip off.

Sho! Nobody t' all but Ol' Brer Rabbit!

Miss Susan she so 'stonish, she des hang her mouf open; can't speak a mumblin' word.

Brer Rabbit he lit out, he did. He holler back as he go: "I gwine keep de 'membrance of all dat you tole me 'bout Brer Rabbit. I sho is!"

THE DYEING OF MR. RABBIT

OLE MISS RABBIT she a kinder anxious somebody. She done see so much trouble. Her eyes done got nigh 'bout pop outer her head watchin' fer to see whicher way and how Mr. Rabbit is comin' home.

His eyes nigh 'bout popped outer his head peepin' out fer to see whicher way and how is de safes' way fer him to get home. Yit Mr. Rabbit he do keep steady at his tricks.

One day Miss Rabbit, she at de well doin' de week's washin', de chillen all off huntin' pa'tidge eggs, Mr. Rabbit he come home. 'Twa'n't nobody in de house. He take up de drinkin' gourd. Miss Rabbit she des done burnt out de mouf hole in de handle of a new green gourd, and done scrape and holler and scrape it out to make a new drinkin' gourd fer de fambly fer de nex' year.

Mr. Rabbit he take dat gourd in de shed room, and he shet de do', he do. He pull up de chist 'ginst de do' and fasten it close. Den he tuck out his pocket knife and set to cuttin' up

dat new gourd. He 'low to cut and carve hisself a new set er teef, 'caze he been missin' teef ever since he knocked out mos' de teefes dat he had in his head at Miss Susan's cake-walk.

'Bout time he git thoo makin' dem teefes and settin em in his mouf, Miss Rabbit she come in de front room do'. She stir up de coals and de chunks in de fire place, and she put on a new back log. She put a bit er bacon on de meat hook over de fire, and she set de skillet on de coals to git het up. She po' de clabber out de jar in de churn, and she turn 'round and 'round to look fer de gourd fer ter dip water fer to rinse off de churn dasher.

Mr. Rabbit he no sooner got dem gourd teef set in his mouf dan he spy Miss Rabbit's dye-pot whar she dips de hanks er yarn in. De dye-pot settin' out on de shed room winder shelf. Dat make him take a notion what makes him laugh. Lawsy-massy-me! His mouf is so full now er teefes dat when he laugh he sound like somebody chatterin' and chokin'.

Miss Rabbit she stop lookin' fer de gourd fer to rinse her churn dasher. She stop and listen.

Mr. Rabbit he dip de rag in de dye-pot and he laugh agin.

Miss Rabbit she sho some er de chillen in de

shed-room and done drown in de wash-tub, or done catch a-fire and clean burnt up. She drap de dasher and run to de shed-room do'.

De do' won't open.

Ole Mr. Rabbit he rubbin' de mop on his whiskers, yit laughin' 'bout how he gwine fool de folks at de next settlement. "He-he! He-he!" His whiskers ain't grey now. He move de dye-mop dis way and dat.

Miss Rabbit she shake and she shake, she beat and she beat at dat do'.

Mr. Rabbit he des now hear her at de do'. He say deep down in his th'oat, bes' he can talk wid his mouf so full of dem gourd teefes, "Go way fum dat do'!"

Miss Rabbit she 'low, "You dar, ole man? Gracious me, ole man, what you doin' in dar?"

Mr. Rabbit, he 'low, "Go way fum dat do'. I'm dyein'!"

Miss Rabbit she shove and she push worser, yit she can't budge dat do'. Den she run hollerin' out de house to git up de chillen and 'larm de plantation. She holler up de ol'es' boy, and sont him atter de Snake-Doctor. She call up de nex' ol'es' boy, and sont him atter de Preacher Crow. She sont de nex', and de nex' fer ter give de ansah to de feller servants to 'larm all de plantation 'round. She tell 'em

don't spare dey breaf and dey wind, caze dey daddy say he dyin'.

No sooner dan Miss Rabbit gone ter git up de chillen, dan Mr. Rabbit done got all fixed up to suit hisself. Den out de shed-room winder he lipt and he lopt down de cross-cut path to de nex' settlement.

Time de chillen, de neighbors, de preacher, de whole plantation git ter de house Miss Rabbit she set up sech an 'larm as never was, 'bout her ole man say he dyin'.

Woodpecker, he out de side er de house:

"Tap, tap!
Rap, rap!"

Woodpecker drivin' coffin nails.

In dash de Snake-Doctor.

Miss Rabbit twix' hollerin' and cryin' tell him Mr. Rabbit he done tole her thoo de do' dat he dyin'. She spec' now he gwine say he dead. She say when he tell her he dyin' his teefes dey's chatterin' in his head den.

Snake-Doctor say dat a mighty bad sign, 'caze when is anybody heard Mr. Rabbit's teefes chatterin' befo'? Den he say, "Whar he?"

Miss Rabbit she p'int to de shed-room do', and she 'low, "Dar he."

Snake-Doctor, he low, "Somebody bust open de do'."

Des as de whole plantation was 'bout to turn loose and bust de shed-room do' down, Mr. Fox came ramblin' 'long.

He 'low, "Hi, what y'all want to bust dat do' down fer?"

De folks and critters 'low, " 'Caze Brer Rabbit in dar. He done say he dyin'. Spec d'rectly he gwine say he dead."

Mr. Fox clap his leg, double up and laugh and laugh, he do. He 'low "Ef y'all honin' atter seein' Brer Rabbit, des go 'crost to de nex' settlement. Brer Rabbit dar wid his whiskers dyed bodacious red wid poke-berry juice dye, and new gourd teefes in his mouf. Him pickin' de banjo and jokin' 'mongst de gals."

Dat sort er broke up de funeral.

PIG AND PEPPER

FOR a minute or two Alice stood looking at the little house, and wondering, when suddenly a footman in livery came running out of the wood—(she considered him a footman because he was in livery; otherwise, judging by his face, she would have called him a fish)—and rapped loudly at the door with his knuckles. It was opened by another footman in livery with a round face and eyes like a frog; and both footmen, Alice noticed, had powdered hair that curled all over their heads. She felt very curious to know what it was all about, and crept a little way out of the wood to listen.

The Fish-Footman began by producing from under his arm a great letter, nearly as large as himself, and this he handed over to the other, saying, in a solemn tone, "For the Duchess." The Frog-Footman repeated this. Then they both bowed low, and their curls got entangled together.

Alice laughed so much at this that she had to

run back into the wood for fear of their hearing her; and when next she peeped out, the Fish-Footman was gone, and the other was sitting on the ground by the door, staring stupidly up into the sky.

Alice went timidly up to the door and knocked.

"There's no sort of use in knocking," said the Footman, "and that for two reasons. First, because I'm on the same side of the door as you are; secondly, because they're making such a noise inside no one could possibly hear you." And certainly there was a most extraordinary noise going on within—a constant howling and sneezing, and every now and then a crash, as if a dish or kettle had been broken to pieces.

"Please, then," said Alice, "how am I to get in?"

"There might be some sense in your knocking," the Footman went on, without attending to her, "if we had the inside of the door between us. For instance, if you were inside, you might knock, and I could let you out, you see." He was looking up at the sky all the time he was speaking, and this Alice thought decidedly uncivil. "But perhaps he can't help it," she said to herself, "his eyes are so very

nearly at the top of his head. But at any rate, he might answer questions. How am I to get in?" she repeated aloud.

"I shall sit here," the Footman remarked, "till tomorrow—"

At this moment the door of the house opened, and a large plate came skimming out straight at the Footman's head. It just grazed his nose, and broke to pieces against one of the trees behind him.

"—or next day, maybe," the Footman went on in the same tone, exactly as if nothing had happened.

"How am I to get in?" Alice asked again, in a louder tone.

"Are you to get in at all?" said the Footman. "That's the first question, you know."

It was, no doubt, only Alice did not like to be told so, and the Footman seemed to think that this was a good opportunity for repeating his remark. "I shall sit here," he said, "on and off, for days and days."

"But what am I to do?" said Alice.

"Anything you like," said the Footman, and began whistling.

"Oh, there's no use in talking to him," said Alice desperately, "he's perfectly idiotic," and she opened the door and went in.

The door led right into a large kitchen, which was full of smoke from one end to the other. The Duchess was sitting on a three-legged stool in the middle, nursing a baby. The cook was leaning over the fire, stirring a large cauldron which seemed to be full of soup.

"There's certainly too much pepper in that soup," Alice said to herself, as well as she could for sneezing.

There was certainly too much of it in the air. Even the Duchess sneezed occasionally, and as for the baby, it was sneezing and howling alternately without a moment's pause. The only two creatures in the room who did not sneeze were the cook and a large cat which was lying on the hearth, and grinning from ear to ear.

"Please, would you tell me," said Alice, a little timidly, for she was not quite sure whether it was good manners for her to speak first, "why your cat grins like that?"

"It's a Cheshire-Cat," said the Duchess, "and that's why. Pig!"

She said the last word with such sudden violence that Alice jumped; but she saw in another moment that it was addressed to the baby and not to her, so she took courage, and went on again:—

"I didn't know that Cheshire cats always grinned. In fact, I didn't know that cats could grin."

"They all can," said the Duchess, "and most of 'em do."

"I don't know of any that do," Alice said very politely, feeling quite pleased to have got into the conversation.

"You don't know much," said the Duchess, "and that's a fact."

Alice did not at all like the tone of this remark, and thought it would be well to try to introduce some other topic. While she was trying to fix on one, the cook took the cauldron of soup off the stove and at once set to work throwing everything within reach at the Duchess and the baby—the fire-irons came first. Then followed a shower of saucepans, plates, and dishes. The Duchess took no notice of them, even when they hit her; and the baby was howling so much already that it was quite impossible to say whether the blows hurt it or not.

"Oh, please, mind what you are doing!" cried Alice, jumping up and down in an agony of terror. "Oh, there goes his precious nose!" as an unusually large saucepan flew close by it and very nearly carried it off.

"If everybody minded their own business," the Duchess said in a hoarse growl, "the world would go round a great deal faster than it does."

"Which would not be an advantage," said Alice, who felt very glad of an opportunity to show off her knowledge. "Just think what work it would make with the day and night! You see the earth takes twenty-four hours to turn round on its axis—"

"Speaking of axes," said the Duchess, "chop off her head!"

Alice glanced rather anxiously at the cook to see if she meant to take the hint. But the cook was busily stirring the soup and seemed not to be listening, so she went on again, "Twenty-four hours, I think, or is it twelve? I—"

"Oh, don't bother me," said the Duchess, "I never could abide figures!" And with that she began nursing her child again, singing a sort of lullaby to it as she did so, and giving it a violent shake at the end of every line:

"Speak roughly to your little boy,
And beat him when he sneezes;
He only does it to annoy,
Because he knows it teazes."

Chorus
(in which the cook and the baby joined)
"Wow, wow, wow!"

While the Duchess sang the second verse of the song, she kept tossing the baby violently up and down, and the poor little thing howled so, that Alice could hardly hear the words:

"I speak severely to my boy,
I beat him when he sneezes,
For he can thoroughly enjoy
The pepper when he pleases!"
Chorus
Wow, wow, wow!"

"Here! You may nurse him a bit, if you like," the Duchess said to Alice, flinging the baby at her as she spoke, and she hurried out of the room. The cook threw a frying pan after her as she went, but it just missed her.

Alice caught the baby with some difficulty, as it was a queer shaped little creature, and held its legs and arms out in all directions "just like a star-fish," thought Alice. The poor little thing was snorting like a steam-engine when she caught it, and kept doubling itself up and straightening itself out again, so that altogether, for the first minute or two, it

was as much as she could do to hold it.

As soon as she had made out the proper way (which was to twist it up into a sort of knot, and then keep tight hold of its right ear and left foot, so as to prevent its undoing itself) she carried it out into the open air. "If I don't take this child away with me," thought Alice, "they'll surely kill it in a day or two." She said the last words out loud, and the little thing grunted in reply—it had left off sneezing by this time.

"Don't grunt," said Alice, "that's not at all the proper way of expressing yourself."

The baby grunted again, and Alice looked very anxiously into its face to see what was the matter with it. There could be no doubt that it had a very turn-up nose; also its eyes were getting extremely small for a baby. Altogether, Alice did not like the look of the thing at all. "But perhaps it was only sobbing," she thought, and looked into its eyes again to see if there were any tears.

No, there were no tears. "If you're going to turn into a pig, my dear," said Alice seriously, "I'll have nothing more to do with you. Mind that now!" the poor little thing sobbed again, or grunted, it was impossible to tell which, and they went on for some time in silence.

Alice was just beginning to think to herself, "Now what am I to do with this creature when I get home?" when it grunted again, so violently, that she looked down into its face in some alarm. This time there could be no mistake about it; it was nothing more nor less than a pig, and she felt that it would be quite absurd for her to carry it any farther.

So she set the little creature down, and felt quite relieved to see it trot away quietly into the wood. "If it had grown up," she said to herself, "it would have made a dreadfully ugly child, but it makes quite a handsome pig, I think." And she began thinking over other children she knew, who might do very well as pigs, and was just saying to herself "if one only knew the right way to change them—" when she was a little startled by seeing the Cheshire-Cat sitting on a bough of a tree a few yards off.

The Cat only grinned when it saw Alice. It looked good-natured, she thought; still it had very long claws and a great many teeth, so she felt that it ought to be treated with respect.

"Cheshire-Puss," she began rather timidly, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"—so long as I get somewhere," Alice explained.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if only you walk long enough."

Alice felt that this could not be denied, so she tried another question. "What sort of people live about here?"

"In that direction," said the Cat, waving its right paw around, "lives a Hatter; and in that direction," waving the other paw, "lives a March Hare. Visit either you like. They're both mad."

"But I don't want to go among mad people," Alice remarked.

"Oh, you can't help that," said the Cat, "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

"How do you know I'm mad?" said Alice.

"You must be," said the Cat, "or you wouldn't have come here."

Alice didn't think that proved it at all; however, she went on, "And how do you know that you are mad?"

"To begin with," said the Cat, "a dog's not mad. You grant that?"

"I suppose so," said Alice.

"Well, then," the Cat went on, "you see a dog growls when it's angry, and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when I'm pleased and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore, I'm mad."

"I call it purring, not growling," said Alice.

"Call it what you lilke," said the Cat and vanished.

Alice was not much surprised at this. She was so used to queer things happening. While she was still looking at the place where it had been, it suddenly appeared again.

"By-the-by, what became of the baby?" said the Cat, "I'd nearly forgotten to ask."

"It turned into a pig," Alice answered quietly, just as if the Cat had come back in a natural way.

"I thought it would," said the Cat and vanished again.

Alice waited a little, half expecting to see it again but it did not appear, and after a minute or two she walked on in the direction in which the March Hare was said to live. "I've seen hatters before," she said to herself, "the March Hare will be much the more interesting,

and perhaps, as this is May, it won't be raving-mad—" As she said this, she looked up, and there was the Cat again, sitting on a branch of a tree.

"Did you say 'pig' or 'fig'?" asked the Cat.

"I said 'pig', " replied Alice," and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing so suddenly; you make one quite giddy."

"All right," said the Cat, and this time it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone.

"Well, I've often seen a cat without a grin!" thought Alice, as she went on toward the house of the March Hare, "but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in my life!"

GRANDFATHER'S PRIZE PIG

ONCE upon a time, when Grandfather was a little boy named John and lived in a red farmhouse at the end of a country road, there was going to be a fair.

A country fair in those long ago days was almost as much fun for boys and girls as a circus. It was held in the Fair Grounds, a big, round, green place farther on than John's house. There were always white tents where the largest potatoes and pumpkins and squashes and cabbage raised on the neighboring farms were shown. There were frosted cakes, and thick pies, and crisp loaves of bread, and red and green patchwork quilts in morning star pattern, and bunches of asters and dahlias exhibited also in the tents.

For days the farmers drove their buggies past John's house, and the hired men took the best sheep and cattle to the Fair Grounds. There was a brass band from the village to play there every afternoon and evening. There was apt to be a penny peep show for the

children, and there was sure to be a gingerbread and lemonade stand.

The judges sat on a platform that had been specially built for them in the Fair Grounds and judged the exhibits and gave out the prizes. The fair was almost as important and pleasant as Christmas or the Fourth of July.

Grandfather had a pet pig when he was a little boy, and it was named Henry for the boy who had given it to him. Henry seemed just like any other pig when he was little, but John took very good care of him and he grew up to be an unusually fine one. John washed Henry to keep him pink, and he fed him apples, and mush, and ground-nuts until Henry grew so fat as to surprise even the farmers nearby.

"That is a very fine pig of yours, John," Great-grandfather, who was Grandfather's father, said one day as he looked into Henry's pen. "He is fat enough to be entered for a prize at the fair. Why don't you take him over?"

"Well, I think I will," John said. And that is how it happened that Henry started to go to the Fair Grounds.

The fair was always held in the late summer when it was warm. John's mother, who was Great-grandmother, washed and ironed his

brown linen suit, for it was a long road to the fair. She put a new red band on his last year's straw hat, and John tied a blue ribbon around Henry's neck. Then the two, John and Henry, started out about ten o'clock one morning.

Henry had never been away from the farm and he seemed to like the idea of the trip at first. He grunted as he trotted along in front of John, and John thought that they would get to the Fair Grounds long before noon.

But after they had gone about an eighth of a mile, Henry sat down in the road and wouldn't get up. He was warm, and he had decided not to go any farther.

John tried to lift Henry up and carry him, but he was too heavy. Then he cut a willow switch and switched Henry a little. Henry got up and went on a short ways and then he sat down again. John switched, and pushed, and tugged the pig, but Henry would not be driven. He would go a few steps and then he would sit down again. John was almost ready to cry, and he was so warm himself that the red came out of his hat band and ran down over his face in streaks.

Suddenly he saw a cloud of dust in the road. It came nearer, and he saw that it was raised

by the buggy from the railway station. It stopped beside him, and out stepped his Aunt Jane with her carpet bag. She had come to visit Great-grandmother for the last days of the fair.

"You needn't drive me any farther," Aunt Jane said to the driver. "Here is John. He can carry my bag and I will walk the rest of the way."

John looked at the heavy bag and then at Henry sitting there in the road. He was a polite boy, but he didn't know what to do. "I was taking my pig to the fair, Aunt Jane," he said.

"Well, he doesn't seem to be going very fast," Aunt Jane said. "You had better drive him home again, Johnny."

John tried to keep back his tears. He took his Aunt Jane's bag in one hand and with the other he tried to make Henry stand up and start home. But Henry had made up his mind that he was not going to be driven in that direction either. He would not move an inch. So John took Aunt Jane and the bag back to his home, and left Henry there in the road until he could drive down for him with the wagon.

But there were a great many things to do, for Great-grandmother had not expected Aunt

Jane so soon. John had to hunt for eggs, and pick currants, and help with the churning. It was not until afternoon that he could go for Henry, and when he came to the place where he had left him Henry was gone!

John felt very badly indeed. He was too much ashamed to tell any one what had happened to his pig. He always fed Henry himself, so no one missed him from his pen, but when John went to look at the empty pen, he did cry a little.

The next afternoon they all drove over to the fair. John had asked if he could not stay home, but Great-grandmother said that he must be ill to say a thing like that and needed a dose of pennyroyal tea. So, at the last minute, when he smelled the tea, John decided to go. There had never been a livelier fair. The brass band was playing and there were crowds of people. John could smell the gingerbread, but he was not one bit happy. He could not bear to look at the enclosure where the prize stock was. Suddenly, though, John saw something strange!

Among the prize winners was a large pig with a blue ribbon around his neck. His medal was tied to the ribbon. It was Henry. He had done just what pigs usually do, gone

in the opposite direction from the one in which people want them to. When John had tried to drive him home, he had started the other way and had reached the fair after all.

And the joke of it was that Henry won two prizes, one prize for being so fat, and another for entering himself at the fair. He was the only pig who had ever done such a thing before.

THE DISCONTENTED PIG

EVER so long ago, in the time when there were fairies, and men and animals talked together, there was a curly-tailed Pig.

He lived by himself in a house at the edge of the village, and every day he worked in his garden. Whether the sun shone or the rain fell he dug and hoed and weeded, turning the earth around his tomato plants, and loosening the soil of the carrot plot, until the fame of his vegetables traveled through seven counties, and each year he won a prize at the royal fair.

But after a time this pig grew tired of the endless toil.

"What matters it if I do have the finest vegetables in the kingdom," he asked himself, "since I must work from morning until night to raise them? I shall go out in the world and look for an easier way to earn my living."

So he locked the door of his house, and shut the gate of his garden, and started up the road.

A good three miles the little Pig traveled until he came to a cottage almost hidden in a grove of trees. Lovely music sounded around

him, and he smiled, for he had an ear for sweet sounds.

"I will go and try to find the source of that music," he thought, following the direction from which it seemed to come.

Now it happened that in that cottage lived Thomas, a cat who made his living by playing on the violin. Little Pig saw him standing there in the door, pushing the bow back and forth across the strings of his violin. It put a thought into the Pig's head. Surely, this must be an easier way of earning one's living than digging in a garden, and pleasanter, too.

"Will you teach me to play the violin, Friend Thomas?" asked the little Pig.

Thomas looked up from his bow and nodded his head.

"To be sure," he said, "only do as I am doing."

He gave the little Pig the bow and the fiddle, and the Pig began to saw, but, oh, *squeak, quang!* No sweet music fell upon his ear. The sounds he heard were like the squealing of his baby brother pigs when a wolf was near the house.

"Oh," he cried, "This is not music!"

Thomas, the cat, nodded his head. "Of course not," he said. "You haven't tried

enough. He who would play the violin must work, and work hard."

"Then I think I will look for something else," Little Pig said, "because I find this as hard as digging in my garden." And he gave back the bow and fiddle, and started along the road.

He walked on and on until, at last, he came to a hut where lived a Dog who made cheese. He was kneading and moulding the curd into cakes, and the Pig thought that it looked very easy.

"I have decided to go into the cheese business myself," he said, and he asked the Dog if he would teach him the trade.

This the Dog was quite willing to do, and a moment later the Pig was working beside him. But soon he grew hot and tired, and stopped to rest and fan himself.

"No, no!" exclaimed the Dog. "You will spoil the cheese. There can be no rest until the work is done."

Little Pig opened his beady eyes in amazement. "Indeed," he replied, "then this is just as difficult as raising vegetables or learning to play a violin. I must go on and look for something easier." And again he started on the road.

On the other side of the river, in a sweet, green field, a man was taking honey out of bee-hives. The little Pig saw him as he crossed the bridge, and he thought that he had seldom seen any trade that would suit him better than this. It must be wonderfully pleasant there in the meadow among the flowers. Honey was not heavy to lift, and ever so often he could stop and take a taste. The little Pig ran as fast as he could to ask the Beeman if he would take him into his employ.

This plan pleased the man as much as it did Little Pig.

"I've been looking for a helper for a year and a day," he said. "Begin work at once."

He gave the Pig a veil and a pair of gloves, telling him to fasten them on well. Then he told him to lift the honey-comb out of a hive.

The little Pig ran to do it, twisting his curly tail in the joy of having at last found a business that suited him. But, *buzz, buzz!* The bees crept under his veil and inside his gloves. They stung him on his fingers, his snout, his ears, and his tail until he squeeled, dropped the honey, and ran.

"Come back!" called the Bee-man.

"No, indeed," called back the little Pig, "the bees sting too hard."

The man nodded his head. "Of course they do," he said. "That is part of the work. You cannot keep bees without being stung once in a while at least."

Little Pig blinked his eyes and began to think hard. "One must practise until one's arm aches before learning to play the violin," he said to himself, "When one makes cheese, one dares not stop a moment until the work is done. In taking honey from a hive the bees sting you until your head is on fire. Working in my garden is not so bad after all. I am going back to it."

So the little Pig went down the road toward home, and was soon at work in his carrot plot. He raked, and hoed, and weeded, singing all the time, and there was no more contented Pig in all the kingdom. Every autumn he took his vegetables to the royal fair and never failed to bring home a prize. And sometimes, on holidays, the Cat, Thomas, and the Dog who made cheese, and the Bee-man came to visit him.

A SMALL STORY

THERE was once a hen who talked about another hen in a not very good way, and in not at all a friendly way. The hen about whom she talked was named Pheendy Alome. Her own name was Teedly Toodlum. They both belonged to a flock of white hens which lived in the far-away country of Chicksum-eatyourkornio.

Now, the hen who was named Teedly Toodlum went around among the other hens making fun of Pheendy Alome on account of her having a speckled feather in her wing. She told them not to associate with Pheendy Alome, or scratch worms with her, or anything, all because she had that speckled feather in her wing.

One of the hens to whom Teedly Toodlum talked in this way was deaf, and so she could not hear very well. She had become deaf in consequence of not minding her mother. It happened in this way. A tall Shanghai rooster crowed close to her ear when she was

just hatched out of her shell. This Shanghai stood very near, and in such a way that his throat came close to her nest, and he crowed there. She had a number of brothers and sisters who had come out at about the same time. These chicks wanted to put their heads out from under their mother's feathers to see who was making the noise. But their mother said: "No, no—no! Keep under! You might be made deaf. I have heard of such a thing happening."

But one of the chicks did put her head out, and close to the Shanghai's wide open throat, too, just as he was crowing terribly. Then her mother said: "Now, I shall have to punish you. I shall prick you with my pin feathers."

So the chick was pricked with her mother's pin feathers, and she became deaf besides, so that when she grew up she could hardly hear herself cackle. And this was the reason she could not understand very well when the hen named Teedly Toodlum was telling the others that the hen named Pheendy Alome had a speckled feather in her wing.

One day the hen named Teedly Toodlum scratched a hole in the sand beneath a bramble-bush, and sat down there to get cool. And while she was cooling herself there, a cow came

along on the other side of the bramble-bush with a load of passengers on her back. The cows in the country of Chicksumeatyourkornio permitted the hens to ride on their backs, and when a large number were on they would step carefully so as not to shake them off. In frosty weather the cows allowed them to get up on their backs to warm their feet. Sometimes hens who were troubled with cold feet used to fly up and push off the other hens who had been on a cow's back long enough.

The cow passed along on the other side of the bramble-bush and, by slipping one foot into a deep rut that was hidden in the grass, and so could not be seen, upset the whole load of passengers. She then walked on, but the passengers stayed there in the grass and had a little talk together, after their own fashion, of course.

The deaf hen happened to be among them and after a while, seeing that the others were having such sport, she asked to know what it was all about. Upon this, the others, at least those who could stop laughing, raised their voices and all tried at once to make her understand. And this is what they said:

"Think of that goose of a hen, Teedly Toodlum, telling us not to go with Pheendy Alome,

because Pheendy Alome has a speckled feather in her wing when, at the same time, Teedly Toodlum has *two* speckled feathers in her own wing, but doesn't know it!"

Teedly Toodlum was listening in her hole in the sand on the other side of the bramble-bush, and she heard rather more than was pleasant to hear. She looked through the bramble-bush and saw them. Some had their heads thrown back laughing; some were holding on to their sides, each with one claw; and some were stretching their heads forward, trying to make the deaf one understand; while the deaf one held her claw to her ear in order to hear better.

"Oh, I do feel so ashamed!" Teedly Toodlum said to herself. "I see now that one should never speak of the speckled feather one sees in another, since one can never be sure that one has not speckled feathers oneself."

THE MYSTERY OF THE COOKIES

"DO you suppose that you could make some of them with four legs?" Newton, standing beside the kitchen table, asked Mother.

Mother looked at the wonderful cookies that she was making, some of them baked a nice, crispy brown, and some only just cut out and ready to be put in the oven. She had made gingerbread cooky men, white sugar cooky chickens and ducks, and some others that looked like roosters.

"I think that I can," she told Newton, and then she cut out some very fine cooky rabbits.

"Oh," Newton shouted, "how splendid! I don't believe that there will be anything so nice at the church cake sale as your cookies, Mother."

Mother sighed a very small sigh as she slipped the last tin of cookies into the oven and wiped her warm face on the kitchen towel. "Mrs. Clark has made an angel cake and a gold cake with the yolks that were left from the angel one. Your Aunt Helen always sends

one of those rich fruit cakes, and I heard Mrs. Beecher say that she was making three chocolate cakes with four layers apiece and extra thick frosting. But of course she can make chocolate cake since Mr. Beecher keeps the store and has plenty of sugar. Cookies don't look like much, but they are a lot of trouble to make."

"And everybody likes them, Mother," Newton said, taking a peep inside the sweet smelling oven. "I don't believe that any four-legged cookies ever went to the church cake sale before."

"Well, these won't," Mother said, "unless you can take them down to the parish house, Newton, because the baby is so fretty and I must stay home and look after her. I will pack them ever so nicely, and you will be careful won't you, Newton. I don't want them to break."

"Of course I will. I'll start as soon as they are ready," the little boy said.

It was very exciting down at the parish house when Newton arrived with the big box of cookies. The door was not unlocked as yet, but the tables set out on the lawn were piled high with the most tempting looking boxes. Newton put his on the doorstep and then went around the

tables, taking little peeps under the covers to see what was inside the other boxes. It was wonderful! There, in all their splendor, waited the four layer chocolate cakes, all three of them, the white angel cake, and the gold one, not to speak of juicy fruit cakes, thickly frosted sponge cakes, cup cakes with icing flowers and initials on the top, and cocoanut layer cakes as white and fluffy as clouds.

Newton was so busy making up a dream about himself in which he lived in Cakeland, the king, with the privilege of eating as many as he liked, that he failed to see the sexton open the door of the parish house. Then, when he did see, there was so much crowding and confusion as the donors of the cakes took them in, that he was pushed to one side.

"Never mind," Newton thought, "the cookies are safe right there at the door. When all the women get in I will carry in the cookies and open them, and won't their eyes stick out!"

But when Newton looked for his box, it was gone. Although he went into the parish house and looked in every nook, and asked people about them, no one had seen those wonderful cookies. And Newton had to start home, his heart very sad indeed, and his mind very much puzzled.

He did not go straight home. He couldn't bear to, for he knew that the trouble was due in a way to his own carelessness. He should never have left the box of cookies there on the doorstep. But the strange thing about it was that only the ladies with their boxes had come in and gone out of the gate. Where had those four and two-legged cookies taken themselves?

Suddenly, Newton found out. He had gone the length of Main Street and come to the little laundry of nice, Chinese Mr. Hop Lee, the father of Happy, and John, and Baby Hop Lee. Newton knew the Hop Lees, and he liked the black-eyed, pig-tailed little Hop Lees. Happy was always ready to smile at him when he brought the laundry. John had given him a wonderful top, and the baby looked like a small mandarin in his yellow apron and odd cap.

But here were the Hop Lees seated around the ironing table on which marched a procession of cookies, men, chickens, ducks, and rabbits. They were eating cookies, too, as fast as they could, and never had the Hop Lees seemed so happy.

Newton ran all the way home. It was hard to understand. The Hop Lees lived a full half mile from the parish house. Who had taken

the church cookies down to the laundry?

At last Newton, almost crying, told Mother about it, and she said not to mind, and she was as much puzzled as he. "Those children needed a batch of cookies, with no mother to cook for them," she said, "I don't know but it was just as well that they got there, but I don't understand."

No one did understand until after supper.

"Here, Timmy, Timmy, come and have your supper," Mother called, and Timmy, his tail between his legs, crawled out from behind the wood box where he had been hiding. "What ails that dog?" Mother asked. "He looks as if he had done something he shouldn't have. Newton, did Timmy go with you down to the parish house this afternoon?" she asked.

"He followed," Newton said, "but I lost him after a while."

Mother thought a moment, for she was wiser than any one else in the family. Then she sat down in the rocking chair and laughed until it seemed as if she would never stop. When she could, she spoke.

"Your father's collars were in that nice clean box, Newton, and I took them out to pack the cookies in it in a napkin. Timmy must have seen the collars and when you left the

box on the door step, he took it on down to the laundry. You know he goes there with you every week and carries the box in his mouth. Good old Timmy!" and Timmy, joyful, went up to Mother to be petted.

"Four legged cookies, and carried to the Hop Lees on four legs," laughed Newton, "I don't believe any of the other cake was half so much loved."

BOWWOW-CURLYCUR AND THE WOODEN LEG

THE boy and the girl—no, that is impolite—the girl and the boy, stood at the garden gate looking down the road.

Bowwow-Curlycur, with his hair done up in curl papers, was there too, and he also was looking down the road.

The cook had taken every stick to boil the oatmeal porridge; and the hoe, the shovel, the spade, and the rake had all gone to a party given by the new mowing machine. Seven nice plants and one young tree, and nothing with which to dig little houses in the ground for the roots to live in!

"What shall we do?" asked the boy. "The sun is going down behind Troykachunk Hill as fast as ever he can!"

What on earth were they to do? Bowwow-Curlycur would have been willing to have scooped out a few holes with his nose, but he had an appointment with the dog who stole chickens, and so he wanted to keep his nose clean.

"Somebody is coming down the road," said the girl.

"It's a man, and doesn't he walk oddly?" said the boy.

"I'll go and see who it is," barked Bowwow-Curlycur, and he made himself so flat that he looked like a queer kind of a giant caterpillar, squeezed under the gate, and ran down the road.

Bowwow-Curlycur was a most wonderful dog. He could bark so plainly that anyone of common intelligence who heard him could understand every word he said.

"Who are you?" he asked as he danced round the stranger.

Bowwow-Curlycur danced beautifully, much better than the girl and boy, for you see he had four legs while they each had only two.

The man had common intelligence, so he answered, "All right, old fellow." Then Bowwow-Curlycur stopped dancing, sniffed at him, growled at him, turned back, ran to the girl and the boy, and barked one word. But it was a word of two syllables, equal to two little words.

"Sailor!" barked Bowwow-Curlycur.

Sure enough, as the man came nearer, the girl and the boy saw that he was dressed in a blue striped shirt with a large turnover collar,

blue trousers, a pea-jacket, a tarpaulin hat, and a wooden leg.

"Ship-ahoy!" shouted the sailor as soon as he saw the girl and the boy, "What craft's this?" That was his way of saying, "How do you do? Who are you?"

"Oh, if you only would!" said the girl.

"Oh, yes, if you would!" said the boy.

"Lend us your wooden leg for a few minutes," said the girl.

"Shiver my timbers!" said the sailor, and he laughed so loudly that his hat fell off and Bowwow-Curlycur bit a large piece out of the rim. "What do you want my wooden leg for, youngsters?"

"Well, you see," said the girl, who was smarter than the boy, "we have some plants and a young tree to set out, and the cook has used all the sticks in the fire, and the hoe, the shovel, the spade, and the rake have all gone to a party given by the new mowing machine. Bowwow-Curlycur doesn't want to get his nose dirty, and so we have nothing to dig the root houses with."

"Won't you lend us your leg for a little while?" asked the boy.

"Blessed if I don't!" said the sailor, "but you will have to take me with it, for it is so

much attached to me that it can't leave me."

"Oh, no indeed!" said the wooden leg, but so softly that no one but Bowwow-Curlycur heard it, and he put his head on one side, stuck out his tongue, but barked nothing.

Then the sailor threw his leg that wasn't wooden up in the air, spun around three times on the leg that was wooden, commenced whistling the sailor's hornpipe, and came into the garden.

"Here's fun!" barked Bowwow-Curlycur, and ran around after his own tail like mad.

So they formed a procession. The sailor went first and stamped in the ground with his wooden leg. The boy came next and put a plant in the hole that was made by the wooden leg, and the girl followed with the young tree in her arms. Bowwow-Curlycur carried his ears and his curl papers. The cat who could make faces with her tail came after, with her four youngest kittens. At last all the plants were set out and only the young tree remained.

"Now," said the sailor, "I must make a deep hole for this," and he raised his wooden leg and brought it down with such force that he buried it in the ground up to his knee, and, oh, it wouldn't come out again! The sailor tugged and pulled, and pulled and tugged. The boy

and the girl pulled and tugged, and tugged and pulled. Bowwow-Curlycur scolded and snapped at the leg that wasn't wooden, but all was of no use.

At last the sailor threw up his arms in the air, gave a great jerk, and away he flew straight up towards the sky like a rocket, leaving his wooden leg behind him.

"Jolly!" said the boy, "what a lark!" And the girl said, "Oh, my!"

Bowwow-Curlycur for once in his life was too astonished to say anything.

The cat made a dreadful face with her tail and then walked solemnly off, her four kittens marching behind her. And the moon came out just then, and the girl and the boy knew that it was bed time so they went to bed.

But about twelve o'clock at night when everything was still except the frogs, and the crickets, and the katydids, and a few other things of that kind that stay up all night so that they can see the sun rise, the girl and the boy heard a strange *tramp, tramp, tramp* in the garden.

Getting up and peeping out of the window, they saw the wooden leg hopping down the walk, and as it passed they heard it *clack* to itself, "How cleverly I got rid of that sailor.

Now I'm off to see the world by myself!" And the wooden leg went out of the garden gate and they never saw it again. But, looking up at the moon, they beheld the face of the sailor wearing a broad grin.

As for Bowwow-Curlycur, after he had taken his hair out of the curl papers and made his call on the dog who stole chickens, he buried-in a hole that the wooden leg had made, and he had saved—a few choice bones, and then he slept the sleep of a just dog.

TURNING INTO CATS

ONCE upon a time there was a law that on a certain day, when the meeting house bell rang at noon, everybody should turn into a cat.

Some people don't believe that this is true, but you just ask the children and the barn swallows!

Well, and so you may be sure that it was great fun to sit up on the big granite rock on the side of Deer Hill and see them then, just where they were, and whatever they were doing, turning into cats at that very moment.

The minister's son had come into his father's study with his hat in his hand, and said: "Shall Cornelius and I, sir, take our scythes, sir, and go out and mow a little while, sir?"

And then the sexton caught hold of the bell rope. He always rang the bell exactly when the sun-dial, and the noon mark, and his grandmother's eight day clock said it was noon. *Ding. Dong!* went the bell and—it was only a maltese kitten who held the rope!

Just at that hour Aunt Patty was out in her garden hoeing weeds, with an old hat of Uncle Rodney's on her head. And she began to turn, first her nose, and then her chin. They were very long and sharp when she was Aunt Patty, but they grew short and snubby, and whiskers began to show, and her ears pricked up as though she heard something. Then, quicker than you can say *scat,* she was a calico colored cat chasing Deacon Davis' hens that were trying to sneak in through her garden fence. After scaring them almost out of their feathers, she went into Deacon Davis' yard, and into the house through Mrs. Deacon Davis' cat-hole. Up to the back chamber she went and prowled about, and sniffed in all the dark corners and behind old tea chests and barrels.

When she was Aunt Patty, she had always suspected that Mrs. Deacon Davis had some cobwebs and poke-holes out of sight, for all that she kept everything looking as neat as wax on the outside.

And then the minister's son jumped with one spring on the minister's shoulder and began to bite the minister's hair and claw off his glasses, for he liked rough ways and mischief as well as any other boy, only he had to be proper, because he was the minister's son.

The minister, solemn and dignified, looked around, a good deal astonished. And then his glasses grew rounder and rounder, and his arms grew slenderer and slenderer, and then he seemed to wink all over. Next, there was a great black cat with a white spot on his throat, and a white face, and four white paws sitting in the study chair, and one paw rested on a thick volume of sermons.

It was a great change for the minister. But as for Mrs. Deacon Davis, why, she did not seem to alter very much. Her eyes had been the color of the mildest skim milk before, much more faded than the eyes of an old cat; and her hair had always been pale buff and sort of furry. She had a way of rubbing herself against the side of a chair as she talked along in a purr-purring way. She stopped work for the first time in her life, though, and taking her yellow paws out of the wash-tub, she began chasing dandelion down.

Now, as soon as ten clocks anywhere in town struck one at the same second, all these cats turned back to people again; and you ought to have seen how surprised they were to catch themselves doing such odd things!

Aunt Patty had got in through the parsonage cat-hole, and was rummaging through the

minister's wife's bureau drawers among her best clothes. As badly as that looked in a cat, t looked a thousand times worse in Aunt Patty, still wearing Uncle Rodney's old hat, and with a hoe tucked under her arm.

Mrs. Deacon Davis was curled up asleep in the rocking chair, and she rubbed her eyes, and put her hand right into the wash tub again, and didn't know that anything had happened to her. She would not believe it if you were to tell her today. Only, when her clock struck one—it was always a little slow—she felt worried to see a few cat-hairs on the plush of the rocking chair, and to realize that she had lost so much good time right in the middle of the day. "But then," she thought, "my nap has rested me so much, and I do suppose I needed it. I shall just have to work the smarter to make up."

The minister was the most astonished of all, for he found himself playing with a large, brown, limp rat.

"This is very extraordinary," he said, "most remarkable! Son," he called to the black kitten that was just swinging down from a tree in the garden where it had been chasing a squirrel, "Take this animal out and bury it somewhere." And then he started walking up

and down the foot-path from the door to the gate, with his hands behind his back, thinking over the heads of his next Sunday's sermon.

On the whole, it was funnier when the cats became people again than when the people became cats. Just think it over some night as you are dropping off to sleep, and fancy how the people you know, one after another, would look turning into cats, and what they would start doing. And the next thing, if you don't believe my story ever happened, you will be believing some other story not a bit more true.

WHY GRANDFATHER FROG HAS NO TAIL

OLD MOTHER WEST WIND had gone to her day's work, leaving all the Merry Little Breezes to play in the Green Meadows. They had played tag and run races with the Bees, and played hide and seek with the Sunbeams, and now they were gathered around the Smiling Pool where on a green lily pad sat Grandfather Frog.

Grandfather Frog was old, very old indeed, and very, very wise. He wore a green coat and his voice was very deep. When Grandfather Frog spoke, everybody listened respectfully. Even Billy Mink treated Grandfather Frog with respect, for Billy Mink's father and his father's father could not remember when Grandfather Frog had not sat on the lily pad watching for green flies.

Down in the Smiling Pool were some of Grandfather Frog's great-great-great-great-great grandchildren. You wouldn't have known that they were his grandchildren unless

someone had told you. They didn't look the least bit like Grandfather Frog. They were round and fat and had long tails, and perhaps this is why they were called Pollywogs.

"Oh, Grandfather Frog, tell us why you don't have a tail as you did when you were young," begged one of the Merry Little Breezes.

Grandfather Frog snapped up one of the foolish little green flies and settled himself on his big lily pad, while all the Merry Little Breezes gathered round to listen.

"Once upon a time," began Grandfather Frog, "the Frogs ruled the world, which was mostly water. There was very little dry land —oh, very little indeed! There were no boys to throw stones, and no hungry Mink to gobble up a foolish Frog baby who happened to be taking a sun bath."

Billy Mink, who had joined the Merry Little Breezes and was listening, squirmed uneasily and looked away guiltily.

"In those days all the Frogs had tails, long, handsome tails of which they were very, very proud indeed," continued Grandfather Frog. "The King of all the Frogs was twice as big as any other Frog, and his tail was three times as long. He was very proud, oh, very proud in-

deed of his long tail. He used to sit and admire it until he thought that there never had been and never could be such a tail. He used to wave it back and forth in the water, and every time he waved it all the other Frogs would cry, 'Ah!' and, 'Oh!'

"Every day the King grew more vain. He did nothing at all but eat and sleep and admire his tail.

"Now you all know that people who do nothing in this world are of no use and there is little room for them. So when Mother Nature saw how useless the Frog tribe had become she called the King Frog before her and she said:

" 'Because you can think of nothing but your beautiful tail it shall be taken away from you. Because you do nothing but eat and sleep, your mouth shall become wide like a door, and your eyes shall start forth from your head. You shall become bow-legged and ugly to look at, and all the world shall laugh at you.'

"The King Frog looked at his beautiful tail and already it seemed to have grown shorter. He looked again, and it was shorter still. Every time he looked his tail had grown shorter and smaller. By and by when he looked there was nothing left but a little stub which he couldn't even wriggle. Then even

that disappeared, his eyes popped out of his head, and his mouth grew bigger and bigger."

Old Grandfather Frog stopped and looked sadly at a foolish green fly coming his way. "Chug-arum," said Grandfather Frog, opening his mouth very wide and hopping up in the air. When he sat down again on his big lily pad the green fly was nowhere to be seen. Grandfather Frog smacked his lips and went on:

"And from that day to this every Frog has started life with a large tail, and as he has grown bigger and bigger his tail has grown smaller and smaller, until finally it disappears, and then he remembers how foolish and useless it is to be vain of what nature has given us.

"And that is how I came to lose my tail," finished Grandfather Frog.

"Thank you," shouted all the Merry Little Breezes. "We won't forget."

THE RACCOON AND THE BEE-TREE

THE Raccoon had been asleep all day in the snug hollow of a tree. The dusk was coming on when he awoke, stretched himself twice, and jumping down from the top of the tall, dead stump in which he made his home, set out to look for his supper.

In the middle of the woods there was a lake, and all along the lake shore there rang out the alarm cries of the water people as the Raccoon came nearer and nearer.

First, the Swan gave a scream of warning. The Crane repeated the cry, and from the very middle of the lake the Loon, swimming low, took it up and echoed it back over the still water.

The Raccoon sped merrily on, and finding no unwary bird that he could seize, he picked up a few mussel-shells from the beach, cracked them neatly and ate the sweet meat.

A little further on, as he was leaping hither and thither through the long, tangled meadow grass, he landed with all four feet on a family

of Skunks—Father, Mother, and twelve little ones—who were curled up sound asleep in a soft bed of broken dry grass.

"Huh!" exclaimed the father Skunk, "What do you mean by this, eh?" And he stood looking at him defiantly.

"Oh, excuse me, excuse me," begged the Raccoon. "I am very sorry. I did not mean to do it! I was just running along and I did not see you at all."

"Well, be careful where you step next time," grumbled the Skunk, and the Raccoon was glad to hurry along.

Running up a tall tree he came upon two red Squirrels in one nest, but before he could get his paws upon one of them they were scolding angrily from the topmost branch.

"Come down, friends," called the Raccoon. "What are you doing up there? Why, I wouldn't harm you for anything!"

"Ugh! You can't fool us," chattered the Squirrels, and the Raccoon went on.

Deep in the woods, at last, he found a great hollow tree which attracted him by a peculiar sweet smell. He sniffed and sniffed, and went round and round until he saw something trickling down through a narrow crevice. He tasted it and it was deliciously sweet.

He ran up the tree and down again, and at last he found an opening into which he could thrust his paw. He brought it out covered with honey!

Now the Raccoon was happy. He ate and scooped, and scooped and ate the golden, trickling honey with both forepaws until his pretty, pointed face was daubed all over.

Suddenly he tried to get a paw into his ear. Something hurt him terribly just then, and the next minute his sensitive nose was frightfully stung. He rubbed his face with both sticky paws. The sharp stings came thicker and faster, and he wildly clawed the air. At last he forgot to hold on to the branch any longer, and with a screech he tumbled to the ground.

There he rolled and rolled on the dead leaves until he was covered with leaves from head to foot, for they stuck to his fine, silky fur. Most of all they covered his sticky face and his eyes. Mad with fright and pain, he dashed through the forest calling to some one of his own kind to come to his aid, for he did not understand the bee stings.

The moon was now bright, and many of the woods people were abroad. A second Raccoon heard the call and went to meet it. But when he saw a terrifying stranger plastered with dry

leaves racing madly toward him, he turned and ran for his life, for he did not know what this thing might be.

The Raccoon who had been stealing the honey ran after him as fast as he could, hoping to overtake and beg the other to help him get rid of his leaves.

So they ran and ran out of the woods to the shining white beach around the lake. Here a Fox met them, but after one look at the queer object which was chasing the frightened Raccoon he too turned and ran away at his best speed.

Presently a young Bear came loping out of the forest and sat up on his haunches to see them go by. But when he got a good look at the Raccoon who was plastered with honey and dried leaves, he scrambled up a tree to be out of the way.

By this time, the Raccoon was so frantic that he hardly knew what he was doing. He ran up the tree after the Bear and caught hold of his tail.

"Woo! Woo!" snarled the Bear, and the Raccoon let go. He was tired out and dreadfully ashamed. He did now what he ought to have done at the very first—he jumped into the lake and washed off most of the leaves.

Then he went back to his hollow tree and curled himself up and licked and licked his soft fur until he had licked himself clean, and then he went to sleep.

JACK-O-LANTERN ALIVE

"AND one day in the late fall," Uncle Jack went on, as he and Helen and Judson sat together on the big couch in front of the open fire, "when the Jack-O-Lantern was sitting all by himself out in the corn field, his big eyes shining in his pumpkin head, he thought that he would like to make a journey to town. So he—" but at this most exciting part of the story, Uncle Jack pulled out his watch. "Dear me," he said, "half past seven, and you two will have to go to bed. Tomorrow night, I will tell you about Jack-O-Lantern in town."

Helen sighed. Uncle Jack was able to think up the most interesting stories, and he told them to her and her brother every evening after supper. A Jack-O-Lantern who came alive and took a journey! Had there ever been

such a story as that, though? She went over to the window to look out at the wide lawn before she went upstairs. Pussy sometimes played out there late and had to be called in. But Helen did not see Pussy.

On the gate post of the empty place next door sat Jack-O-Lantern, the light in his pumpkin head streaming out from his big eyes, his nose, and between his rows of sharp teeth. No one had lived in the house on that place for a year.

Helen pulled down the shade quickly, and hurried up to bed. "I did not really see Jack-O-Lantern," she thought. "I was thinking about Uncle Jack's story, and saw a make-believe Jack-O-Lantern." And the next night Helen was just as eager as Jack to hear the rest of the story.

"So Jack-O-Lantern went to town all alone," Uncle Jack began the next night right after supper, "and he found a nice little empty house where he could live by himself and watch the children going by to school. You see he had been lonely out there in the corn field—"

"*Mew, mew, mew,*" came Pussy's voice from the back door. It was a frosty night, and she wanted to come in beside the fire.

Judson ran to the door, and stepped out to pick up Pussy. Then he jumped. From the

window of the empty house of the place next door looked Jack-O-Lantern. His big eyes shone right over toward Judson. As Judson looked at him in wonder, Jack-O-Lantern came out of the empty house and as far as the back fence. He climbed up there and sat down, nearer Judson.

Judson hurried in the house, and ran up to Uncle Jack. "Oh, Uncle Jack," he asked, "would you mind changing the story, and telling us about Bushy Tail, the squirrel?"

"Why, no," Uncle Jack said, but he wondered why Judson had asked this, and why Helen was so pleased, too, not to hear any more about Jack-O-Lantern, whose story he had been making up as he went along.

The next night a splendid thing happened. Mother said that Helen and Judson might stay up until eight o'clock in order to take a basket of fruit and mince pies to grandmother who lived way down at the other end of Maple Avenue. They had put Jack-O-Lantern quite out of their minds, for they thought that they had only imagined seeing him. Grandmother gave them hot chocolate, kissed them good night, and then they started home. But each remembered Jack as they came to the empty house next door.

Just as they passed the gate, they heard footsteps behind them. Helen turned around, and she saw Jack-O-Lantern running after them. Judson, too, looked around, and he saw that Jack-O-Lantern had *four* legs. How he and Helen ran!

"I saw him night before last," Helen gasped.

"I saw him last night," Judson said.

Trot, trot; gallop, gallop, went Jack-O-Lantern's four little feet behind them. He was gaining on them. They could hear him breathing. There was no use trying to escape him. Just before they reached their home gate, Judson turned, stopped, and bravely faced him. And Jack-O-Lantern spoke, in two voices!

"Oh, please don't run away from us," said his girl's voice.

"We are so lonesome in our new house, and we thought that you would like to see the Jack-O-Lantern we made," said his boy's voice.

How Helen and Judson laughed to see, in the light from the street lamp, a fat pumpkin Jack-O-Lantern carried high above their heads by a little boy and girl of their own ages. Molly and Henry had just moved into the empty house next door; not all their things had come yet. But they had bought a pumpkin the first day, remembering their good times in their

country home, and had made Jack-O-Lantern.

They were not lonely another day, though, with Helen and Judson to play with. And Uncle Jack laughed harder than any of them at the joke.

"I never thought that my story was going to come true," he said, "but that is the odd part of stories. Sometimes they do."

THE DINNER THAT RAN AWAY

"IT looks as if it was going to be a green Thanksgiving day tomorrow," Mr. Sweet, the grocer, said as he helped Bruce to load his express cart with the things for the dinner that he had just bought for his grandmother. The cart was pretty full to begin with, for a fat turkey sat up near the seat, there were some potatoes and a big winter squash back of him, and the bag of turnips. Now there were the sugar, the cranberries, raisins, and citron to go in, but Mr. Sweet was a wonder at packing. He put all the packages in so that they would not spill, and then he smiled at Bruce and at Hiram, who had come down town to help with the Thanksgiving marketing.

"Can you two fellows get home all right without a spill, do you think?" he asked. "You know it is up hill all the way, and steep at that."

"Oh, yes, thank you, Mr. Sweet," Bruce said. "We'll manage."

"Baa-aa," said Hiram in a loud voice to show that he would do his part. Hiram was Bruce's tame goat, and he could pull a loaded express cart up almost any steep hill, the cord fastened to his harness.

Off they started, and soon they left the shops behind, and started up Hilldale Avenue toward grandmother's house. *Tap, tap,* went Hiram's little hoofs on the sidewalk, and Bruce ran along beside, kicking the dry leaves that danced along beside him. Thanksgiving tomorrow, and roasted turkey, mashed turnips, cranberry sauce, and citrons and raisins in the fruit cake! No wonder Hiram's feet twinkled along so gaily, and Bruce drove him with a hop, skip, and a jump. All those good things to eat were right there in the cart. Up, up the Avenue they climbed, and soon now they would be stopping with a flourish at grandmother's kitchen door.

Just before they reached the house, though, they came to Claire's house, and from her kitchen there drifted the sweetest kind of a smell; boiling butter scotch, and Claire always wanted to share the candy that she made with Bruce. Perhaps she had telephoned to him while he was doing the marketing. Anyway, he decided to stop and see Claire for a few mo-

ments. He tied Hiram to the hedge and went in.

Yes, that was just what had happened. Claire had telephoned over to ask Bruce to come and share the butter scotch, and she was so glad that it was not too late. They poured it out into pans, cut it into little squares, and then waited a while for it to cool enough so that they might eat some.

"I must go now, Claire," Bruce said at last. "You see Hiram and I have the whole Thanksgiving dinner out here in the road."

But when they went out, Hiram and the dinner were gone!

"I tied him ever so carefully," Bruce said, almost ready to cry, for there was not a sight of the cart or the goat anywhere.

"We must look for it then," Claire said, and they went all the way to the bottom of the hill and as far as Mr. Sweet's grocery store, but not even a hair of Hiram, or a single raisin was to be found.

"It's too bad, and it is all my fault, Bruce," Claire said, "for I was making candy and you smelled it. I am going home with you, and tell your grandmother all about it."

But it was long after the time when Bruce had been expected home when they did arrive. They had spent almost an hour looking for the

Thanksgiving dinner that had run away. There was Mrs. Flynn, who came sometimes to help grandmother when she had a good deal of cooking to do in the kitchen. But she was not cooking. Oh, no, she was telling such a wonderful story that grandfather was listening, and no one noticed Bruce and Claire as they came into the kitchen and listened too.

"Not believe in fairies?" Mrs. Flynn was saying, her Irish eyes blue and her wrinkled cheeks rosy with excitement. "The fairies this very day, just a bit of a while ago, brought me and Patsy, and Ellen, and little Bridget such a Thanksgiving dinner as we have not laid eyes on in years. A fat turkey, and potatoes, and squash, and turnips, and all the makings of sauce and a pudding. Here were the children looking out of the window at the dinners going by, and all at once a little express cart, all alone of itself, rolled up to our gate. Out ran Patsy, just in time to fetch it in. Such a dinner as we never had in our lives before!"

"You don't say so," grandfather said. "Fine, Mrs. Flynn, but odd."

"I am so glad," grandmother said; "we were going to send some dinner down to you, but it wouldn't have been all that."

Bruce and Claire, their eyes popping out of

their heads, went out into the back yard. They did not know what to say, but just then Hiram wandered in through the gate. His mouth was red from berries he had been eating. Some green leaves hung from his whiskers, and a bit of torn rope was around his neck. Hiram always did come home in the end, and he never was able to hide anything that he had done.

"Hiram has been eating from our hedge, Bruce," Claire exclaimed.

"And he gnawed the rope that held the cart," Bruce went on.

"And then the Thanksgiving dinner ran away down the hill to Mrs. Flynn's house, there at the beginning of the avenue," Claire giggled.

"Come on in, and tell grandmother," Bruce said. "She will just be glad."

"But we won't tell Mrs. Flynn," Claire added, "we'll let her believe in the fairies."

And grandmother felt just the same way about it. Patsy needed a cart, and grandfather said that Bruce could have a new one, and they would have a chicken pie for dinner.

"How about Hiram?" Bruce asked.

"It looks as if it was going to be a green Thanksgiving day," grandfather said, "you don't ever need to worry about a goat." And out in the yard Hiram answered, "Baa-aa!"

THE WONDER NUT

"THERE," Timothy said, putting the two empty shells of the fat walnut together and holding them until the glue was dry, "no one would ever suspect that it is different." He looked out at the windy hills and the bare cornfield. "I wish, oh, how I do wish—" but just then Mother called from the farm kitchen, "More wood, Timmy, dear." So no one but the mice in the wood shed heard the rest, "that I wasn't the only boy."

"There," said Nutcracker as he filled the last little wooden box with neatly cracked and assorted nuts and set it with the others in the window of the tiny store down near the city dock, "I think that I can take some time off and crack one for myself."

Outside, in the city street, the big lamps glowed like the eyes of goblins and the chestnut-roasters sang of fall, and red leaves, and bonfires burning somewhere. Nutcracker knew about these. He had heard stories of the country in the public school, and whenever

he went down to the dock for a sack of nuts from the country for his father's nut store, he pretended all the way home, with it on his back. First, he was a frisky squirrel like the squirrels he had never seen. Then he was a pumpkin Jack-O-Lantern grinning through his teeth at the people he met. But when he came to the store, he was Tony; Nutcracker, the boys called him, cracking nuts as soon as school was over and selling them as fast as he could.

"Can I have a walnut?" he asked his father, and when he heard, "yes," he dug deep down in a sack for a large one. Nutcracker held it up and shook it. "Too full of meat to rattle," he said, "a fine fat one." Then he laid it on the stone to crack it.

But Nutcracker waited a moment. He took the nut up in his brown hands and looked at it closely.

"Funny," he thought. "I never saw a nut like this." He felt the edges, and then he took his jack knife out of his pocket and carefully cut away the rim of brown crystal glue that held them. He stuck the point of the knife between the edges and gently pried them open. The two parts of the big walnut fell away on the table. They were clean inside as a whistle.

But out tumbled a small, folded paper.

Nutcracker took it to the window where the street lamp shone in, and unfolded it. The writing was tiny, so that quite a long letter could be finished in so small a space. But Nutcracker could read it. Was he not at the head of his class in school?

"Dear Squirrel," in that delightful way did the wonder nut first speak, "I am Timothy, the boy of Forest Hills Farm who gathered this sack of nuts to send away. I am the only boy, and I wish that you would come and spend Thanksgiving with me. Captain Butler of the *Mary Jane,* who will bring the nuts to you, knows me and he could bring you back on the return trip. Do come.

"TIMOTHY BROWN."

"Father!" Nutcracker cried, waving the letter high, "listen," he read it. "Am I not a squirrel, a city squirrel, cracking nuts all my spare time? I found this wonder nut, and only the other day the Captain said that he would like to take me for a trip some day. May I go?"

So that was how Nutcracker, with a bag of figs and a loaf of sweet Italian bread and some

odd little chocolate drops wrapped in shining red and blue and silver papers, went down to the dock to board the *Mary Jane* the week before Thanksgiving. And the chestnut-roaster sang to him all the way of fall, and red leaves, and burning bonfires, and a country boy waiting at the end of the trip to share Thanksgiving with him.

NED, THE TOY-BREAKER

NOW Christmas comes with all its joys, and, oh, such wondrous pretty toys Kris Kringle's men have brought tonight, that children marvel at the sight!

To Neddy, quite too many things the happy day of Christmas brings. There's, first of all, the Christmas tree, and sparkling on it he can see the lighted candles, many score, and apples gilt and silver o'er. Whole piles of dainty gingerbread, and sugar plums are thickly spread. And Ned is such a happy boy, he stands and laughs for very joy.

A golden horse he finds, besides, upon whose back a soldier rides. A trumpet red, a drummer, too, who beats a regular tattoo as oft the handle round you twist. So often works each tiny fist.

Ned's father says, "Now mind, dear boy, and while these presents you enjoy, still spoil not what you cannot make, and do not all your playthings break."

But Ned would no attention pay. He likes to spoil as well as play. He breaks the trumpet right in two. The drummer's handle, in a freak, he madly turns to make it creak, till man and drum to pieces go. The fragments form a heap confused! Was ever drummer more ill-used? Here lies a drum, and there a boot, and here's the drum—forever mute. And here the sword, and there the stand, and drumsticks, but without a hand. In short, such ruin has been wrought as though a battle had been fought.

And when Papa the mischief spies, and sees the broken toys, he cries, "Why, Ned, is this the care you take, when told to play but not to break?"

But careless Neddy does not hear the warning voice so kind and near. And when Papa has turned his back, again the toys go snap, and crack! The horse and rider both are dashed upon the floor and, reckless, smashed, as loud the soldier cries, aghast, "Ah, me, ah, me, I'm dying fast."

Now, in the Christmas fairies trip, and from the tree the apples strip. They take the horse and gingerbread, and all the playthings spoiled by Ned, and with the broken fragments make a substance which they knead and bake; and by-

and-by, when duly warm, into a giant nose they form.

Full six feet long and very thick, this nose on Neddy's face they stick; and always with this pig-like snout must Neddy live and go about!

SANTA CLAUS' SLEEPY STORY

THERE was once a little girl who would not go to sleep, and it was Christmas Eve! Her red stocking hung in the chimney corner, and her little pink self was snuggled deep down in the soft blankets, but her blue button eyes were wide open.

"What shall I do about this?" thought Santa Claus, who was waiting and worrying up on the snowy house roof beside the chimney. "I can not drive over to the next house until I have filled this little girl's stocking and left her a shut-eye doll, and I can not go down the chimney until she is asleep."

So Santa Claus peered down the chimney, rubbed his nose, pulled his beard, and then called softly to the cricket who lived in the hearth.

"House Cricket, will you put up your fiddle, your little brown fiddle, until Christmas morning so that the little girl may go to sleep?" asked Santa Claus.

But the cricket, who was improvising a new Christmas tune, merry and shrill, chirped back up the chimney, "I will put up my fiddle, Santa Claus, if the gray mouse will stop dancing here on the hearth."

So Santa Claus called down the chimney very softly to the gray mouse, who tripped and skipped on the toes of her little gray feet to the tune of the cricket's chirping, and he said,

"Gray Mouse, Gray Mouse, will you stop dancing, that the House Cricket may stop fiddling, and the little girl may go to sleep?"

But the gray mouse liked to watch her own gray shadow dancing beside her upon the hearth, so she chattered back to Santa Claus,

"How can I stop dancing when the Christmas star spreads a path here for my feet?"

So Santa Claus put his chubby hands to his cherry lips and he called way, way up to the sky where the Christmas star shone, "Christmas star, will you please stop making a path on the hearth, so that the gray mouse may stop dancing, and the cricket stop fiddling, and the little girl may go to sleep?"

But the Christmas star had just found a way to shine into the little girl's nursery, and wanted to keep on shining. "I can not do as you ask me," it twinkled back to Santa Claus,

"unless the clouds cover my face with a veil of snow."

So Santa Claus stopped a drifting cloud that hung in the sky just over the roof of the house, and he said to it, "Oh, Fleecy Cloud, will you cover the face of the star with snow, that the gray mouse may stop dancing, and the cricket stop fiddling, and the little girl may go to sleep?"

But the fleecy cloud, in a soft voice that sounded like the winds, said, "I have no snow. You must ask the frost to give me some."

So Santa Claus listened, and, *snap, crackle,* there was Jack Frost right beside him at work on the sides of the chimney. "Jack Frost," said Santa Claus, "will you give the cloud some snow to cover the face of the Christmas star? Then the star will not shine for the gray mouse to dance, and the cricket will stop fiddling, and the little girl will go to sleep. It is Christmas eve, and she is still awake."

"I will," snapped back Jack Frost, who had just finished putting a coat of Christmas sparkle on the roof, and had hung a row of Christmas icicles to the eaves.

So the frost filled the fleecy cloud with snowflakes, and the snow covered the face of the star. Then the star stopped shining for the

gray mouse to dance, and the cricket put away his fiddle. It was quiet, and dark, and the snow fell, and fell, and fell. And Santa Claus crawled softly down the chimney and filled the stocking, and put the shut-eye doll in the chair beside the stocking, for the little girl was fast asleep.

SANTA CLAUS AT CHRISTMAS COVE

"I AM sure that we shall be able to keep warm and comfortable here until spring," Father Brett said the day they moved into the bungalow by the sea at Christmas Cove. Father was a painter, and he was going to paint a beautiful picture of the surf as it looked when it rolled up on the shore in December.

"And there are all the cooking things that I can possibly need in the kitchen, and a nice little store in the village," Mother Brett said tying on her apron.

"Oh, it is so nice here," Lucy Brett said, looking out of the big studio window, "only see all the green Christmas trees right out in the woods back of our house. We can have one of them for Christmas."

"Yes, and let's go out and gather some pine cones in the sheltered places in the woods," Billy Brett said. "They make a snapping noise when you burn them on an open fire."

"Oh, goody! Let's," his sister exclaimed,

so the two children put on their furry coats, their leggings, and their caps and mittens to start out.

It was very still and a little dark there in the woods. Only a short distance from the house, they were not able to see it, for the old trees, evergreens mainly, shut them in like a wintry wall. There was no sound except the boom of the sea, and once in a while the chirp of a snow bird, and the snap, snap of frozen twigs. The snow creaked as they walked over it, digging it away to fill their basket with the cold, dry cones.

"All it needs to make this the real Christmas country," Lucy said, "is Santa Claus' work shop." She looked behind her, shivering a bit with the mystery of the winter woods. "We are all alone, Billy," she said. "We might be way up in the North Land, instead of in Maine."

Billy laughed at her. "Santa Claus' work shop!" he said. "There is none!"

But just then, taking a winding path between the trees, and turning into a small clearing screened by the trees, they came upon it!

Even Billy was breathless. How their hearts beat as they saw the cabin, the twist of gray smoke rising from the little chimney,

pushed open the unlocked door and went inside! No one was in sight, but there was a long work bench strewed with tools and wooden animals partly carved, an elephant waiting to have his trunk curved, a duck with only his tail painted. The floor was deep strewn with shavings, and, oh, the shelves!

There were all Santa Claus' toys, waiting for his trip on the Eve of Christmas; carved wooden dolls that little girls would love to dress, Noah and the ark with all the animals walking up into it, wonderful sets of wooden dishes, birds with wings, ducks that would walk, everything! A regiment of carved wooden soldiers stood on dress parade, their uniforms bright with new paint. There were sailor men with oars in their hands, and beside them wooden sailing ships, little, but strong enough for long voyages.

The children could hardly believe their eyes as they walked in a dream about Santa Claus' work shop. Lucy stopped a second at the window. Then she ran to Billy, clutching his arm as she whispered, "I just saw one of his reindeer running away through the trees!"

Before Billy could say anything, something strange happened in the shop. The toys came alive. The sailor men waved their oars, a duck

waddled along the shelf, the sails of a toy windmill flapped. There is no knowing what else might have happened if, just then, there had not come a low moan from a smaller room off the shop that they had not noticed before. Lucy went in, and then she came to the door, calling Billy.

"Santa Claus seems to be ill. He is in here, sick in bed," she said.

Billy saw him then, a little old man with a wrinkled face, and a long beard as white as the snow. He had a red and white patched quilt pulled up to his chin, and he pointed to the fire that had almost gone out in the fire place. Billy banked it with the cones, and piled on wood from Santa's pile outside the cabin. Lucy put the tea kettle on and made him a cup of strong tea, and then Santa Claus told them all about it.

Was he really Santa Claus? Of course he was, as everyone is who helps make Christmas with love in his heart. He was an old, old sailor, who could not go to sea any longer, and made his beautiful toys there all alone in his little cabin in the woods for the city toy shops. He had wired them so that they would move when he pressed a button, and keep him company. The wild creatures of the wood whom

he fed, the deer, the rabbits, the squirrels and the birds, were his friends. But he was very ill with a cold, and they could not take care of him.

But Mother Brett came and nursed Santa Claus so well that he was up and at his bench, making a ship for Billy, in three days. And he made a carved wooden doll for Lucy with arms and legs that would move. And Father Brett painted a beautiful picture of the old sailor in his shop of toys that sold for so much money in the city that Santa Claus was able to live in comfort among his wild little brothers of the woods, even when his hands were too old to carve toys.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

THERE was a very large family of them, Brother and Little Brother, and Sister and Little Sister, and the Old Baby, and the Little Baby who had come since last Christmas; and it didn't seem possible to hang up all the stockings on Christmas Eve.

"But the Little Baby ought to have a Christmas stocking," the Mother said.

"And the Old Baby will feel so disappointed if he doesn't see his stocking hung up," the Father said.

"Brother and Sister ought to hang up their stockings, because they always have every year," the Mother said.

"And Little Brother and Little Sister love to hang up their stockings," the Grandmother said.

Then the Grandmother had a beautiful Christmas thought. It was a secret, so she did not even whisper it up the chimney, but she asked all the family to bring their Christmas gifts to her room to hide them.

The family had decided not to give as many Christmas gifts as usual this year because there were shoes, and flour, and coal to buy. But what gifts they had were very nice indeed. All the toys they could afford to get were for the two babies. There was a horse on wheels with a blanket for the Old Baby, and a worsted soldier for the Little Baby. There were balls and a jumping jack, and picture blocks to be divided between them. The Old Baby had a pair of red leggings, and the Little Baby had a blue hood.

Big Brother was giving his large jack knife that had two blades to Little Brother, and Big Sister had dressed her best doll in new clothes to give to Little Sister. But Little Brother had emptied all the pennies out of his pig bank and had bought a box of pencils for Big Brother, and Little Sister had emptied all the pennies out of her tin bank that was shaped like a dolls' house to buy a little sewing basket for Big Sister. Mother had knitted Father a new muffler, and Father had bought oranges and molasses sticks for everybody. And everybody had a gift for dear Grandmother, of course, a spectacle case, and a new red pin cushion, and a box of peppermint drops, and many other things.

So all the gifts except those for Grandmother were taken up to her room. The snow fell in the shape of Christmas stars, and the Christmas bells rang in all the church steeples. Then it was Christmas Eve, and after that it was Christmas morning.

"Merry Christmas!" shouted the whole family as soon as they woke up, and then they started for Grandmother's room with her gifts. The Old Baby was able to walk all the way up the stairs, and the father carried the Little Baby.

"Merry Christmas!" the whole family said to Grandmother, and then they all stood still in surprise. Hanging beside Grandmother's fire place was a great big, bulging red Christmas stocking. Grandmother had made it from red flannel, and the Christmas gifts for the whole family were inside.

The toys for the Old Baby and the Little Baby were on top of the great Christmas stocking. The other gifts that the family were giving each other filled the stocking down to the very toe, with the oranges and molasses sticks in between and making the stocking bulge.

The children gave Grandmother her Christmas gifts first, and then they took turns put-

ting their hands in the stocking and pulling out a present.

It was the best Christmas the family had ever had, with just one Christmas stocking!

JOHNNY MOLASSES' ADVENTURE

MOTHER and Polly and Peter made Johnny Molasses a few days before Christmas, just as Mother had made a candy boy with Grandmother when she was a little girl. First, he was boiled in a big kettle until he was soft, and sweet, and stringy. Then they pulled him until he was molasses taffy. Last, he was shaped into a little molasses boy with a round taffy head, a fat taffy body, two stout taffy legs, and two fat taffy arms.

Polly made Johnny Molasses a warm muffler from some of the left-over taffy, and Peter made him taffy puttees neatly wound around his legs.

"Now we must put him out in the snow to cool," said Polly.

"And mind you stay where you are put, Johnny!" Peter said, as he stood Johnny Molasses out at the back door in a nice, cool snow bank.

Johnny Molasses stood there in the snow on his taffy legs as bravely as he could, tied up in

his muffler. But he found it very uncomfortable indeed, having begun life in a candy kettle over a bright, warm fire. At first his legs felt soft and limber, but they soon became hard and stiff, and he could not have run away no matter how much he had wanted to. And he did want to. Oh, how Johnny Molasses did want to run away from that snow bank!

So, when the grocer's boy came around to the back door with the Christmas turkey and the Christmas cranberries in his basket, Johnny watched for a chance. The grocer's boy set his basket down in the snow bank in which Johnny was standing so deep down, and almost out of sight. Johnny was still able to stick, though, and so he stuck himself to the bottom of the grocer boy's basket. And when the boy came out, whistling, and picked up the basket, along went Johnny Molasses for an adventure. And nobody knew that he was stuck to the bottom of that basket.

The boy tossed the basket into the corner of the grocery with ever so many other baskets emptied of their Christmas goodies. It was crowded and unpleasant there, and Johnny did not dare to stick to anything else for fear he would be discovered and sent back to the cold snow bank again. The corner where the bas-

kets were was near the stove, and Johnny began to feel soft, as if he were going to break up. That, he knew, would be as bad as being too stiff, and he did not enjoy himself at all.

All that afternoon and in the evening, until the lights in the grocery store were put out, Johnny Molasses lay there, stuck to the basket, and getting sticky. But, with darkness, the fire burned low and the store was cold. It seemed as if things were going to be better for Johnny Molasses.

But just as he thought this, he saw two great eyes, gleaming like large emeralds in the dark; and he felt himself taken from the corner by his muffler which was held tightly in the teeth of a monster in a gray fur coat.

It was only the grocery cat, out on her nightly hunt for mice, and she did not like the taste of molasses any more than Johnny liked to be carried in her mouth. She was just about to drop him when he saw something huge, and green and prickly. He made a great effort to get loose of the cat's jaws, and stuck to it, and was safe.

Johnny Molasses felt now as if he had lost himself in a huge forest. There was the smell of the woods all about him, and a brown cone lay beside him. It matched him nicely in

color, and he decided to stay right there and see what would happen next. Indeed, he could not have moved if he had wanted to, for he was stuck more tightly than he had been when he took the ride on the bottom of the market basket. And when morning came in the grocery store something did happen. Johnny Molasses and his forest began to move.

It was all very strange. Peering out from his green hiding place, Johnny could see that he was being carried away on the back of the same grocer boy with whom he had arrived the day before. He could not see exactly where he was going, but that did not matter. Almost any place would be better than the store for spending Christmas. Johnny began to wonder if the snow bank had been so bad after all.

On and on they went in the crisp, frosty outdoors, stopping at last, and going into a house. How cozy and warm the room was in which Johnny was now! All about him was green so he could see but little; still he could hear. All at once Johnny Molasses heard Polly, who had stirred him in his kettle, speak.

"Oh, Peter, do come here! Did you ever know of anything so strange? Here, stuck to our Christmas tree, is Johnny Molasses."

Peter came running. "How did it happen?

We thought he was lost. Do come, Mother, here is Johnny Molasses again, but how did he get here?"

Mother could not tell. "Strange things happen at Christmas time," she said. "He looks as if he had been for an adventure, a little twisted, and gnawed, and stretched out. Let us leave him here to trim the Christmas tree. He will look very well there among the branches."

"Oh, yes!" said Peter.

"We will," said Polly, "and we will never eat him. We will keep Johnny Molasses a long time, because we came so near to losing him."

So everything turned out very well for Johnny Molasses. He kept Christmas, and he lived for a long time afterward, until he broke up from old age.

THE PATCHWORK SCHOOL

ONCE upon a time there was a city which possessed a very celebrated institution for the reformation of unruly children. It was, strictly speaking, a Reform School, but of a very peculiar kind.

It had been established years before by a benevolent lady, who had a great deal of money and wished to do good with it. After thinking a long time, she had hit upon this plan of founding a school for the improvement of children who tried their parents and all their friends by their bad behaviour. More especially was it designed for ungrateful and discontented children; indeed it was mainly composed of this class.

There was a special set of police in the city, whose whole duty it was to keep a sharp look-out for ill-natured, fretting children, who complained of their parents' treatment, and thought that other boys and girls were better off than they; and to march them away to the school. These police all wore white topped boots, tall peaked hats, and carried sticks with

blue ribbon bows on them. Many a little boy on his way to school dodged round a corner to avoid one, because he had just been telling his mother that another little boy's mother gave him twice as much pie for dinner as he had. He wouldn't breathe easily until he had left white topped boots out of sight; and he would tremble all day at every knock at the door.

There was not a child in the city but had a great horror of this school, though it may seem rather strange that they should; for the punishment, at first thought, did not seem so very terrible. Ever since it was established, the school had been in charge of a very singular little old woman. Nobody had ever heard where she came from. The benevolent lady who founded the institution had brought her to the door one morning in her coach, and the neighbors had seen the little, brown, wizened creature alight and enter, wearing a most extraordinary gown. This was all that anyone had known about her. In fact, the benevolent lady had come upon her in the course of her travels in a little German town, sitting in a garret window behind a small box-garden of violets, and sewing patchwork. After that, she became acquainted with her, and finally hired her to superintend her school.

You see the benevolent lady had a very tender heart, and though she wanted to reform the naughty children of her native city, she did not want them to be shaken, nor have their ears cuffed. So the ideas advanced by the strange little old lady just suited her.

"Set 'em to sewing patchwork," said this little old woman, sewing patchwork vigorously herself as she spoke.

She was dressed in a gown of bright-colored patchwork, with a patchwork shawl thrown over her shoulders. Her cap was made of tiny squares of patchwork, too.

"If they are sewing patchwork," went on the little old woman, "they can't be in mischief. Just make 'em sit in little chairs and sew patchwork, boys and girls alike. Make 'em sit and sew patchwork when the bees are flying over the clover out in the bright sunlight, and the great blue-winged butterflies stop on the roses just outside the window, and the robins are singing in the cherry trees; they'll turn over a new leaf, you'll see."

So the school was founded, the strange little old woman placed at its head, and it worked admirably. It was the pride of the city. Strangers who visited it were always taken to see the Patchwork School, for that was the

name it went by. There sat the children in their little chairs, sewing patchwork. They were dressed in little patchwork uniforms; the girls wore blue and white patchwork frocks and pink and white patchwork aprons, and the boys wore blue and white patchwork trousers and aprons like the girls'. Their cheeks were round and rosy, for they had plenty to eat—bread and milk three times a day—but they looked sad, and tears stood in the corners of a good many eyes.

How could they help it? It seemed as if the loveliest roses in the whole country were blossoming in the garden of the Patchwork School, and there were swarms of humming birds flying over them and great red and blue-winged butterflies. And there were tall cherry trees a little way from the window perfectly crimson with fruit. Later in the season there were apples and peaches too, fairly dragging the branches to the ground, and all in plain sight of the school-room. No wonder the poor little culprits cooped up indoors, sewing red and blue and green pieces of calico together, looked sad. Every day bales of calico were left at the door of the Patchwork School, and it all had to be cut into bits and then sewed together again.

When the children heard the heavy tread of

the porters bringing in the fresh bales of calico, the tears would leave the corners of their eyes and trickle down their poor little cheeks at the prospect of the additional work. All the patchwork had to be sewed over-and-over, and every crooked or too-long stitch had to be picked out, for the Patchwork Woman was very particular. The children had to make their own patchwork clothes, and after those were done, patchwork bedquilts which were given to the city poor.

Of course, children stayed at the Patchwork School different lengths of time, according to their different offences. But there were very few children in the city who had not sat in a little chair and sewed patchwork at one time or another, for a greater or less period. Sooner or later, the best children were sure to think they were ill-treated by their parents, or did not have enough candy; and the police would hear them grumbling, and drag them off to the Patchwork School. The Mayor's son, who might be supposed to fare as well as any little boy, had been in the school ever so many times.

There was one little boy in the city, however, whom the white-booted police had not yet found any occasion to arrest, though one might have thought that he had more reason to com-

plain than a good many others. In the first place, he had a girl's name, and any one knows what a cross that would be to a boy. His name was Julia. His parents had named him for an aunt, who had promised to leave her money to him if he were named for her.

So there was no help for it, but it was a great trial to him, for the other boys plagued him unmercifully, and called him "sissy" and said "she" instead of "he" to him. Still he never complained to his parents, saying that he wished he had been called by some other name. His parents were poor, hard-working people, and Julia had much coarser clothes than the other boys, but he was always cheerful about it, and never seemed to think it at all hard that he could not have a velvet coat like the Mayor's son, or carry cakes to school for lunch as the lawyer's son did.

But perhaps the greatest cross that Julia had to bear, and the one from which he stood in the greatest danger of getting into the Patchwork School, was his grandmothers. I don't mean to say that grandmothers are usually to be considered as crosses. A dear old lady seated with her knitting beside the fire is a pleasant person to have in the house. But Julia had four, and he had to hunt for their spectacles,

and pick up their balls of yarn so much that he had very little time for play.

It was an unusual thing, but the families on both sides were long-lived, and there actually were four grandmothers; two great ones, and two common ones; two on each side of the fireplace in Julia's home. They were nice old ladies and Julia loved them dearly, but they lost their spectacles all the time, and were always dropping their balls of yarn, and it did make a great deal of work for him. He could have hunted spectacles for one grandmother easily, but when it came to four; one was always losing hers while he was finding another's, and one ball of yarn would drop and roll off, while he was picking up another. Why, it was bewildering at times! Then he had to hold the skeins of yarn for them to wind, and his arms used to ache, and he could hear the other boys shouting at a game of ball. But Julia never refused to do anything his grandmothers asked him to. It was not on that account that he got into the Patchwork School.

It was on Christmas Day that Julia was arrested and led away to the Patchwork School. It happened in this way. As I said before, Julia's parents were poor, and it was all they

could do to procure the bare comforts of life for their families; there was little to spend for knick-knacks. But I don't think Julia would have complained of that.

He had had the same things over and over, over and over, Christmas after Christmas. Every year each of his grandmothers knit him two pairs of blue woollen yarn stockings, and hung them for him on Christmas Eve as a Christmas present. There they would hang—eight pairs of stockings with nothing in them in a row from the mantel shelf, every Christmas morning!

Every year Julia thought about it for weeks before Christmas, and hoped and hoped that he might have something different, but there they always hung, and he had to go and kiss his grandmothers, and pretend that he liked the stockings better than any other present he might have had, for he would not have hurt their feelings for the world.

His parents might have bettered matters a little, but they did not wish to cross the old ladies either, and they had to buy so much yarn that they could not afford anything else.

The worst of it was, the stockings were knit so well, and of such stout material, that they almost never wore out, so Julia never really

needed the new ones. His bureau drawers were full of the blue stockings rolled up in neat little hard balls—all the balls he had ever had —and the tears would come to his eyes when he looked at them. He never said a word about it until the Christmas when he was twelve years old. Somehow that Christmas he was unusually cast down at the sight of the eight pairs of stockings hanging in a row under the mantel; but he kissed and thanked his grandmothers just as he always had.

But when Julia was out on the street a little later, he sat down in a doorway and cried. He could not help it. Some of the other boys had such lovely presents, and he had nothing but those same blue woollen stockings.

"What's the matter, little boy?" asked a voice.

Without looking up, Julia sobbed out his trouble; and what was his horror when he felt himself seized by the arm and lifted up, and found that he was in the grasp of a policeman in white-topped boots. The policeman did not mind Julia's tears in the least, but led him away to the Patchwork School, waving his stick with the blue ribbon as majestically as a drum major.

So Julia had to sit down in a little chair, and

sew patchwork with the rest. He did not mind the close work as much as some of the others, for he was used to being kept indoors attending to his grandmothers' wants, but he disliked to sew. His term of punishment was a long one. The Patchwork Woman, who fixed it, thought it looked very badly for a little boy to complain because his kind grandparents had given him some warm stockings instead of foolish toys.

The first thing the children had to do when they entered the school was to make their patchwork clothes. Julia had finished his and was busily sewing on a red and green patchwork quilt in a tea-chest pattern when, one day, the Mayor came to visit the school. Just then his son did not happen to be serving a term there; the Mayor never visited it with people of distinction when he was.

Today he had a Chinese Ambassador with him. The Patchwork Woman sat behind her desk on the platform and sewed patchwork, the Mayor in his fine broadcloth sat on one side of her, and the Chinese Ambassador, in his yellow satin gown, on the other.

The Ambassador's name was To-Chum. The children could not help stealing glances occasionally at his high eyebrows and braided

queue, but they dropped their eyes on their sewing again directly.

The Mayor and the Ambassador stayed about an hour; then after they had both made remarks they rose to go.

The door of the Patchwork School was of a peculiar nature. It was made of iron of a great thickness, and opened like any safe door only it had more magic about it than any safe door ever had. At a certain hour in the afternoon, it shut of its own accord, and it opened at a certain hour in the morning when the Patchwork Woman said a formula before it. The formula did no good whatever at any other time. The door was so constructed that not even its inventor could open it after it shut at the certain hour of the afternoon, before the certain hour the next morning.

The Mayor and the Chinese Ambassador had stayed rather longer than they should have. They had been so interested in the school that they had not noticed how the time was going, and the Patchwork Woman was so taken up with a very intricate new pattern that she failed to warn them as was her custom.

So it happened that while the Mayor got through the iron door safely, just as the Chinese Ambassador was following it suddenly

swung to, and shut in his queue at a very high point.

There was the Ambassador on one side of the door, and his queue on the other, and the door could not possibly be opened before morning. Here was a terrible dilemma! What was to be done? There stood the children with their patchwork in their hands, staring, open-mouthed, at the queue dangling through the door, and the Patchwork Woman pale with dismay, in their midst, on one side of the door; and on the other side was the terror-stricken Mayor and the poor Chinese Ambassador.

"Can nothing be done?" shouted the Mayor through the key-hole. It was a very large key-hole.

"No," the Patchwork Woman said, "The door will not open until six o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Oh, try it!" begged the Mayor. "Say the formula."

The Patchwork Woman said the formula to satisfy them, but the door remained firmly shut. Evidently the Chinese Ambassador would have to stay where he was until morning, unless he had the Mayor snip off his queue, which was not to be thought of.

So the Mayor, who was something of a phil-

osopher, set about accommodating himself, or rather his friend, to the situation.

"It is inevitable," he told the Ambassador. "I am very sorry, but everybody has to conform to the customs of the institutions of the countries they visit. I will go and get you some dinner, and an extra coat. I will keep you company through the night, and morning will come before you know it."

"Well," sighed the Chinese Ambassador, standing on tiptoe so his queue should not pull too hard. He was a patient man, but after he had eaten his dinner the time seemed terribly long.

"Why don't you talk?" he asked the Mayor, who was dozing behind him in an easy chair. "Can't you tell me a story?"

"I never did such a thing in my life," replied the Mayor, rousing himself, "but perhaps the Patchwork Woman can."

So he asked the Patchwork Woman through the key-hole.

"I never did such a thing in my life," she said, "but there is a boy here that I heard telling a beautiful one the other day. Here, Julia," she called, "come and tell a story to the Chinese Ambassador."

Julia knew a great many stories that his

grandmothers had taught him, and he sat on a stool and told them through the key-hole all night to the Chinese Ambassador.

He and the Mayor were so interested that morning came and the door swung open before they knew it. The poor Ambassador drew a long breath, and put his hand to his queue to see if it was safe. Then he wanted to reward the boy who had made the long night hours pass so pleasantly.

"Why is he here?" asked the Mayor, patting Julia, who could hardly keep his eyes open.

"He grumbled about his Christmas presents," replied the Patchwork Woman.

"What did you have?" asked the Mayor.

"Eight pairs of yarn stockings," said Julia, rubbing his eyes.

"And the year before?"

"Eight pairs of blue yarn stockings."

"And the year before that?"

"Eight pairs of blue yarn stockings."

"Didn't you ever have anything for Christmas except blue yarn stockings?" asked the astonished Mayor.

"No, sir," said Julia.

Then the whole story came out. Julia, by dint of questioning, told some, and the other

children told the rest; and, finally, in the afternoon, orders came to dress him in his own clothes and send him home.

But when he got there, the Mayor and the Chinese Ambassador had been there first. There hung the eight pairs of blue yarn stockings under the mantel, crammed full of the most wonderful presents—knives, balls, candy—everything he had wanted, and the mantel shelf was piled high, too.

A great many of the presents were of Chinese manufacture. There was one stocking entirely filled with curious Chinese toys. A little round head, so much like the Ambassador's that it actually startled Julia, peeped out of the stocking. But it was only a top in the shape of a little man in a yellow silk gown, who could spin around very successfully on one foot, for an astonishing length of time. There was a Chinese lady-top too, who fanned herself as she spun; and a mandarin who nodded wisely. The tops were enough to turn a boy's head.

There were equally curious things in the other stockings. Some of them Julia had no use for, such as silk for dresses, China crepe shawls, and carved fans, but they were just the things for his grandmothers, who, after this,

sat beside the fireplace, very prim and fine, in stiff silk gowns, China crepe shawls over their shoulders, Chinese fans in their hands, and queer shoes on their feet. Julia liked their presents just as well as he did his own. and probably the Ambassador knew that he would.

The Mayor had filled one stocking himself with bonbons, and Julia picked out all the peppermints from them for his grandmothers. They were very fond of peppermints. Then he went to work to find their spectacles which had been lost ever since he had been away.

FOUR-LEGGED SAINT VALENTINE

IT was a very pretty valentine! It opened out like a little window, showing underneath pink roses, blue forget-me-nots, and red hearts. All around the edge were lace paper ruffles. Philip put it carefully into its envelope, sealed it, addressed it with his father's fountain pen, and then left it there on the desk. The postman would be in the big office building soon on his rounds collecting and he would take the valentine with father's mail.

"You may use my fountain pen and my desk whenever Miss Barnes thinks best," Philip's father had said, which was a great honor, and because Philip was careful with ink and papers. He went down to his father's office often after school. If Father was out on business, Miss Barnes, his secretary, was very nice to Philip. She looked up now from her typewriter and spoke to the little boy. "Who is the beautiful valentine for, Philip?"

"My cousin, Molly," Philip said. "You see Molly is visiting us, and I wanted her to have

a valentine from me through the mail. I bought it with my own money; it cost twenty-five cents. I am mailing it here so the postman will deliver it at our house."

"What a thoughtful little boy you are," Miss Barnes said, "I am going out to lunch now, but just leave it there on top of the other letters and the postman will come right in and find it while we are out. Are you going home too? Then we will go down in the elevator together."

Ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling went the bell on the morning of Saint Valentine's Day. Her eyes as bright as stars, Molly went to the door and she came back with her hands full of large envelopes with red hearts on the outside.

"Five for you, and one, two, four, *six* for me," Molly shouted as she gave Philip his valentines. Philip did not open his envelopes at once, for he was so anxious for Molly to find his rose and forget-me-not and lace paper one, but one after the other Molly pulled out her bright valentines and Philip's was not there.

It seemed very strange. Philip had sent it three days ahead of time so as to be sure that it would come in the first mail on Saint Valentine's Day. It was too bad. He couldn't speak of it either, for perhaps it might come in

the afternoon. Molly had so many valentines that she did not miss it; that made it all the harder.

So Philip decided to go down to the office after lunch and tell Miss Barnes the mystery. All the office mail went regularly; of course, it had to! He could be quite sure of that.

On the way up in the elevator, Philip saw a little girl, a little girl in an old dress but with shining eyes. In her hands she had a pretty rose and forget-me-not lace paper valentine just like Philip's lost one. "Look, Tim," she was saying to the elevator man, "how fine, and the only valentine I ever got!"

"Now, isn't that grand!" said Tim, the elevator man, "and who sent it to the little lady?"

"Saint Valentine, Tim," said the little girl with more star-shine in her eyes.

Philip had almost snatched it out of her hand. He knew it was his, for it had been the only one just like that in the shop on the corner. But the happy eyes of the girl had stopped his hands. And when he reached his father's office, everything was excitement.

Father, the postman, a bigger boy than Philip, and Miss Barnes were all talking at once.

"Well, it is all right as long as it turned out this way," Father said.

"It happened when I went out to lunch," Miss Barnes said.

"So of course it wasn't my fault," said the postman.

"Please forgive him," said the boy. "I let him out of my sight only a minute, and he thought that he was doing his duty. You see, sir, he was taught to carry letters for the Red Cross; he seemed to know the color red on a message."

Father smiled. "It is all right," he repeated, "as long as everyone who picked up one of my letters posted it. You say that he left the marks of his teeth on the envelopes when he dropped the letters in the hall?" Father chuckled. "Bring in the culprit," he said then.

Philip could hardly believe his eyes. The boy whistled, and in from the hall came a shaggy little dog wearing a medal for bravery around his neck, but hanging his head because he had just been scolded. Philip couldn't stand it any longer. He ran to the dog and put his hand on his head. Now he knew the secret!

"It's all my fault, dad," he said. "I ad-

dressed a valentine and left it on top of your pile of letters. Miss Barnes remembers. I believe the dog thought the big red heart on the outside meant that it was an important message, didn't you, old sport?" As if he knew, the dog almost wriggled out of his tattered coat with joy. "But the valentine didn't go," Philip went on in wonder. "Do you think any one could have taken it?"

"How did you address it, son?" asked Miss Barnes. She knew about a little boy's first letters.

Philip thought a while. Then he hung his head. "I think I only wrote, 'For Molly,' on it," he said. "What is the name of the little girl whose mother cleans the offices?" he asked.

"Molly," said the boy with the dog. "I've seen her dusting my dad's office after her mother cleans it."

"Saint Valentine!" Philip thought. "I won't tell her that he had four legs, though."

THE SUGAR EGG

THERE was a very important proclamation on the gate of the king's palace, and this was what it said:

"The king wishes a new and different kind of Easter egg for the prince and the princess. It must be brought to the palace on Easter Eve, and there will be a prize for it if it pleases their royal highnesses. If it is like all the former Easter eggs, the subject who brings it will be banished."

Now whoever heard of anything so absurd? Every one in the kingdom, down to the most humble subject, knew their royal highnesses, the Prince Particular and the Princess Perhaps. Not that those were their real names, but whenever the prince was asked if he liked a new toy or game, he would say, "Oh, not particularly," and then he would turn up his nose. And if you asked the princess if she would like to play something quite merry, she was very apt to say, "Oh, perhaps," with a toss of her head which meant that she did not care whether she did or not.

Of course, every Easter in the past, their royal highnesses had hunted for colored eggs on the palace grounds, and had large chocolate eggs made for them in the palace kitchen, and eaten pheasants' eggs for breakfast on Easter Day. How, in the entire kingdom, would it be possible to hatch a new and different egg for them? It could not be done. All the hens hung their heads in despair, and all the farmers expected to be banished from the kingdom on Easter Monday.

But it was not a place of giving up, and in spite of their being so hard to please, their subjects loved the Prince Particular and the Princess Perhaps. So whoever read that strange proclamation on the palace gate went home with the wish to find just the kind of Easter egg for which the king had asked. And a great many people went to work trying to make one.

It was funny, though, the way in which they went about it.

There was the baker. He decided to put several dozen eggs into a huge, egg-shaped cake, so he whisked them up as light as foam, mixed them with flour and other good things, and made a great cake which he frosted with white to look like the biggest egg ever made.

On top he put the royal crest in yellow icing. But what a very indigestible Easter egg this one was!

And there was the toy man. He made a mammoth egg shaped toy dirigible of white rubber, and large enough for their royal highnesses to take a short trip over the palace tree tops and as far as the sea. It was just like a giant egg, but so costly and made with such pains that the toy man had to neglect carving the little wooden dolls and animals which the peasant boys and girls loved so much to buy at his shop.

There, also, was the jewel cutter. He cut two clear, white diamonds in the shape of tiny eggs, one for the prince to wear as a pin in his scarf, and the other for the princess to hang on a golden chain about her neck. But they only sparkled and sent out darts of light; to touch, they were as cold as the winter that had just passed.

So on Easter Eve there was a crowd of the king's subjects at the entrance to the palace, each with his or her odd Easter egg. They were carved of wood, and shaped of gold and silver, painted in all the colors of the rainbow, and some of them so large that they had to be drawn in carts up to the gates.

And on the edge of the crowd came Mother Joy who lived all alone in a tiny cottage on the border of the forest. She had very little comfort of her own, but all the children knew and loved her. Such barley sugar candy sticks as Mother Joy made for them, and she could show them the first young magpies, the first cowslips, and where the fresh cress grew in the brook! But, in spite of this, it was strange that Mother Joy should be here at the gate of the palace on Easter Eve, so poor, and so old. And when people spoke of it, Mother Joy only smiled an odd smile and hid something in her apron.

So all the new and different eggs were taken into the palace throne room to be judged, while the subjects waited outside. But the egg balloon had to be tied to the palace chimney, and everyone was sure that it would take the prize. They waited and waited. Then, suddenly, there came the sound of their royal highnesses laughing more merrily then they ever had before, and everyone was called in to see the prize giving.

Such a surprise! On a purple velvet pillow in the lap of the king, the prince and princess and all the court crowded around it, was a little hollow sugar egg. It had a piece of glass

fitted in the end like a fairy window, and inside, made of scraps of colored tissue paper and lace and grasses, there was a wee house, a green meadow with flowers and children at play in it. The spring, as it comes in the country, was there inside the little sugar egg, seen through the fairy window in the end.

"The prize winning egg!" cried the king, holding up the sugar egg. "Their royal highnesses have never been so happy in their lives with any Easter egg before. They want to go right out into the fields and play. Riches and a coronet for the maker!"

And Mother Joy in her apron came up to the throne, for she had known what to bring to the palace on Easter Eve, that little picture of the spring with a fairy window to see it through.

It happened that all the eggs won prizes of one sort and another. But the best of all was the little sugar egg. They became the fashion in the kingdom and we have had them ever since.

WHAT HAPPENED ON APRIL FIRST

"DEAR me," said Grandmother Brewster, "this is the first day of April, and I am almost afraid to go down to the breakfast table."

And when Grandmother Brewster sat down to breakfast there was something in front of her plate, all covered up with a big, white paper dunce's cap.

"Now, I know I am afraid," she said as she heard Billy and Dolly Brewster chuckling over their bowls of porridge.

"Lift up the cap, Grandmother," they said.

So Grandmother Brewster did, bravely.

Oh, what a surprise! There, underneath, was a red flower pot and in the pot was a red tulip for Grandmother.

"April Fool!" shouted Billy and Dolly.

"Oh, dear," said Grandfather Brewster, as Billy brought him in the morning newspaper, neatly folded, "this is the first day of April and I am almost afraid to open this paper."

Billy and Dolly stood on each side of Grandfather Brewster's chair, trying to look very sober.

"Open it, Grandfather," they said excitedly.

Grandfather Brewster pretended to shake all over with fear, but he opened the paper.

Oh, what a surprise! Folded inside the newspaper was a new spectacle case that Dolly had made for him.

"April Fool!" shouted Billy and Dolly.

Then it was supper time, and Dolly and Billy came very slowly into the dining room.

"This is the first day of April," they said. "We are almost afraid to sit down to supper."

There in front of Grandmother's place was a big pile of thick pancakes. In front of Dolly's plate was a fat chocolate drop. In front of Billy's plate was another fat chocolate drop. Grandmother put the pancakes and ever so much maple syrup on the plates.

"Flannel cakes!" Dolly whispered to Billy.

"Do eat our party supper," said Grandmother, so Billy bravely cut his pancakes and ate a mouthful, and Dolly nibbled her chocolate drop.

Oh, what a surprise! There never was any one who could make such good pancakes as Grandmother Brewster. And inside each of the chocolates was a red cherry.

"April Fool!" laughed Grandmother and Grandfather Brewster.

HOW GRANDPA BUSHY FILLED THE MAY BASKET

GERALD looked carefully up and down the street to see that no one was looking. Then he took from under his coat the May basket that he had filled for his school friend, Marjorie, and went softly up the steps of her piazza. It was the eve of May Day and he wanted her to find it the first thing in the morning. He hung it on the tip of the big brass knocker and ran home.

"I want Marjorie's May basket to be different from any other that I make," Gerald had said to his mother. So Mother had helped him to make it very, very different, and very, very nice. Marjorie had brought Gerald one of her books or games every day when he had that bad cold in the winter. That was why he was so particular about her May basket.

Any little girl would have loved it. It was made of a tiny market basket that Mother had bought at a favor store. Inside, on the gay, tissue paper lining, were some red and white

peppermint drops, some scalloped cookies with pink frosting, and some sugar almonds. On the tip top of the May basket lay a real gingerbread man with two legs, two arms, two raisins for eyes, and ever so many currants for the buttons of his brown coat.

No wonder that Gerald could hardly wait for the morning of May day to go over to Marjorie's house and see how she liked her May basket!

Right after breakfast Gerald went to Marjorie's block and walked down the street until he came to her house. Perhaps she would be out on the steps waiting for him, but, no. Then Gerald saw a very strange thing. There hung the May basket just where he had put it on the part of the brass knocker that stuck out. It had not been touched.

Gerald could see into the dining room, for it had a bay window, and Marjorie sat at the table with three May baskets around her plate, flowery baskets. So of course she had been out on the piazza to get them but she had not taken his. That was strange! Probably she didn't like it because there were no flowers in it, Gerald thought, and he felt very badly. If only Marjorie had lifted the fringed tissue paper that covered the gingerbread boy!

Gerald had just decided sadly to go home, when the front door opened and Marjorie's father hurried out. He was going to take the eight forty-five train and he had very little time, but he noticed the May basket. He touched it, and then he did a very odd thing. He seemed startled and it almost seemed as if he jumped. But he had to hurry and he came down the steps looking plainly puzzled. He saw Gerald.

"Good morning, neighbor," he said. "There seems to be something alive in that May basket."

Something alive! Now Gerald understood why Marjorie had not taken it in. She was afraid. And of course Gerald knew who was alive in the May basket. It was the gingerbread man, who always came alive in stories, but whom Gerald had never known to do it in real life before. He could hardly believe it, but Marjorie's father called back, "It moves." And as Gerald went up the piazza steps, not all the way, but only to the third step, he saw the basket give a little stir. It seemed to wriggle.

Gerald went down the steps again, and around to the back of the house. Marjorie came out just then, and she seemed so glad to

see Gerald. "Was it you who hung the May basket on the knocker?" she asked. "I found it the first thing, and I didn't tell any one about it. You saw him, of course, if you were up on the piazza just now. I think it was dear of you, Gerald. I just left it there, for I couldn't bear to disturb him. He is having the most happy time."

Gerald rubbed his head to see if it were really he or some other boy. Marjorie seemed to be talking about the gingerbread boy. "Having a good time," he repeated half to himself what she had just said.

"Yes," Marjorie told him. "He was eating the sugar almonds when I saw him last. He seemed to just love them, even if his teeth are not very good."

Gerald gasped. Of course the teeth of a gingerbread man wouldn't be very strong, and strange things were said to happen on the eve of May Day, fairies coming, and all that. But this was the morning of the first of May, and he was not dreaming. "I'll go and see," Gerald said, starting bravely toward the front of the house.

Marjorie ran too, warning him, "Don't scare him, Gerald," she said. "I love the May

basket, but I would rather he had it than I, for he is enjoying it so."

Up the steps, two at a time, Gerald went to see the gingerbread man eating sugar almonds. He grasped the May basket, and almost into his face jumped a little man, not in brown, but in gray, and scampered off down the lawn.

"Now you have frightened him away," Marjorie said, "old Grandpa Bushy, who climbed up the pillar of the front door and jumped over into the basket. He thought it was for him on account of smelling the nuts. Poor Grandpa!" But she laughed as she saw only crumbs and chewed paper left in the basket. "I think he had all the May breakfast that he needed," she said.

Gerald sat down on the steps, holding his sides, for he was laughing so. He held the nibbled head of the gingerbread man. Grandpa Bushy was the old squirrel that had lived in one of Marjorie's trees for ever so many seasons. He had filled the May basket and emptied it, too.

THE BIRTHDAY STICK

THE fairy godmother arrived very early at the christening party of the Little Prince Halwyn. She wore a new red petticoat and black cloak, and a larger black cat than she had ever been seen with before sat on her shoulder.

"The fairy godmother has brought the prince a chest of gold, no doubt, or a wishing ring, or a crown set with jewels," the guests whispered to one another and they crowded as close as they could to the place where the Queen held his Royal Highness in her arms.

Something strange happened. The Fairy Godmother took from under her cloak a birthday present for the Prince, and what do you think it was—why, nothing but a stick.

It was not a fat candy stick, or a hobby horse stick, or even a young broom stick from the Fairy Godmother's stables that might grow up into a valuable flying broom some day. It was a plain, straight stick with a few notches cut in it, and the Fairy Godmother said as she presented it to the Queen:

"My gift to Prince Halwyn, my dear. Stand it just outside of the nursery door and see to it that no one carries it away."

Then she took her departure, and all the guests said to one another that she must be growing stingy. But the Queen, who always did what the fairy godmother told her, because she had been her Fairy Godmother, too, stood the notched stick up outside the nursery door and sighed as she did so.

"Perhaps the Fairy Godmother will come for Halwyn's next birthday," she said, "and bring him a different kind of a gift." But she did not come, or for the birthday after that, or for the next, and Prince Halwyn began to grow up into a boy.

"What a funny stick," he said the day he was five years old and stood beside it before he went down to his birthday party, "but my head is a little ways above this notch," he said.

The Queen smiled. "That is the fifth notch," she said. "It must be that you are beyond it because you eat so much bread and milk and run about in the fresh air every day."

Prince Halwyn thought about this, and when the party feast was spread he decided to eat only one piece of birthday cake, and only one piece of candy, and only a very small portion

of sweetmeats. For a whole year he ate bread and butter when he really was hungry for candied rose leaves, and mashed potato when he wanted broiled peacock's breast. And he ran races and played ball with the Court Gardener's little boy instead of sitting by the castle fireplaces and playing with his hundred toys alone.

One day the Court Gardener's little boy fell down when they were running a race and he hurt himself so that he could not walk.

"I'll carry you home on my back," Prince Halwyn said, and he did, although the boy was only a little smaller than he.

Then he was six years old, and he decided to measure himself by his fairy godmother's stick. Why, he was taller than the sixth notch!

"That must be because you are so strong," his mother, the Queen said. "Strength makes you grow fast for a boy of your age."

Prince Halwyn thought about this, and although he was rather afraid of the wild little pony that was his birthday gift, he learned to ride and gallop on it. He learned to swim and to shoot an arrow as straight as any of the huntsmen. He could win in a race with any of the older pages, and he had stout muscles

in his arms and legs, and held his head very high.

One day there was a Court procession and the King and the Queen and Prince Halwyn, dressed in velvet and ermine, rode in a golden chariot at the head of the procession, and following them came the messengers and the musicians and the soldiers and the guards. It was a noble company and all the village turned out to see it; they lined the roadside, and pushed close to the horse's feet. Among them was a little girl who had a nosegay for the Queen. It was a small nosegay, made of the flowers that had grown in the window of a poor kitchen. And although there was a cold wind blowing, the little girl had scarcely enough clothing to keep her warm. But she made her way through the crowd and threw her nosegay right into the Queen's lap; all her life she had wanted to do something for the dear Queen.

"Wait a minute," Prince Halwyn said, and the royal chariot stopped. The Prince jumped out, and taking off his cloak he wrapped it around the little girl who had none.

Then the procession went back to the castle, for it was the Prince's birthday. He was seven years old.

"I must measure myself," he said, "before

the party begins." Oh, he was way, way beyond the seventh notch.

"That must be because you are so healthy, and strong, and also a gallant boy," his mother said, as they went down to the throne room together. "Why, here is the Fairy Godmother," she said.

Sure enough, there she was, and asking for her birthday stick. When they brought it to her, she measured Prince Halwyn by the notches, and then nodded her head in a pleasant way.

Then she took from under her cloak a chest of gold, and a wishing ring, and a crown set with jewels and gave them to Prince Halwyn.

"You are growing into a king so fast that you will need these," she said. "And give me the stick; I may want it for some other boy."

THE CROW-BIDDY

ONCE upon a time there were a man and his wife who, one fine morning, found an egg.

"Well," said the wife, "wait until it is hatched, and we will see what a beautiful bird will come from it!"

But when the egg was hatched, what did they have? A great Chicken, and a very naughty one. But the man and his wife said,

"O WHAT A LOVELY BIRD!"

And the chicken began to crow and make a dreadful noise. And the man said,

"HOW SWEETLY OUR DEAR BIRD SINGS!"

And when this Crow-Biddy snatched everything on the dinner-table, and spilled the cream, the good wife said,

"WHAT AN APPETITE THE DEAR THING HAS!"

And when the Crow-Biddy tore up his

school-books and threw them away afterward, they said,

"WHY, OUR PET KNOWS EVERYTHING!"

And when he broke all the plates and the other dishes, they said,

"HOW LIVELY THE DEAR THING IS!"

After a while the Crow-Biddy beat the man with his spurs, but he only said,

"HOW STRONG AND BOLD HE IS GROWING!"

One day the Crow-Biddy went into the street, and threw stones at the lamps and windows. And then along came a soldier, and caught him by his red comb, and locked him up in a prison. And this time the man and his wife said nothing. They felt really quite relieved.

THE LITTLE TAR MAN

ONCE upon a time, in the days when the animals could talk and lived together just like real people, there were a Fox, and an old Coon, and an old Rabbit who were neighbors.

Now the Fox had a very fine patch of goobers, which were just the same as peanuts, only not roasted, and he cared more for his goober patch than he did for all the rest of his farm. But one morning when the Fox was going around his farm to see how the sweet potatoes and all the rest of his vegetables were growing, he saw tracks. So he followed the tracks and he found out something. The tracks led right straight to his goober patch, and the Fox knew that some one had been grabbing his goobers.

The Fox kept watch the next morning, and the next, and the next, and every day after that. Every day he saw the tracks leading to his goober patch, but he never was able to catch anybody. One day when the old Coon was out looking at his corn patch, the Fox spoke to him,

"Neighbor Coon," he said, "I see tracks leading to my goober patch."

The old Coon thought a minute and then he said to the Fox, "Maybe it might be old Rabbit who was going down to your goober patch," said he.

The Fox turned what old Coon had said over and over in his mind, and the more he thought about it the more sure he was that old Coon was right. So he laid a plan to fix old Rabbit. The Fox stirred up a big bucket of tar, and when the tar was nice and soft, he made a little man out of it. Then he stood the little Tar Man in the middle of his goober patch.

That very night, by the full of the moon, old Rabbit sneaked out of his farm house and made tracks, just as he always had, for the Fox's goober patch. He had a fine appetite for goobers, did old Rabbit. And there in the light of the moon, old Rabbit saw the little Tar Man standing up in the middle of the goober patch.

Old Rabbit thought that it was someone come to steal goobers, so he called out as loudly as he could, "Who's that in the middle of neighbor Fox's goober patch?" But the little Tar Man did not say a word. So old Rabbit lost his temper, and he went into the goober patch,

lippity, lippity, lip, just as fast as he could and he called out, "What do you mean, you little black man, by not speaking back when I speak to you?" And with that, he doubled up his paw and hit the Tar Man in the side of his head, and his paw stuck fast.

This made old Rabbit madder than he was before, so he doubled up his other paw. "You better let me loose, you little black man," old Rabbit said, "I have another paw," and with that he hit the Tar Man on the other side of his head, and his other paw stuck fast.

"Look here!" old Rabbit said, getting madder and madder every minute as he tried to pull loose and stuck fast in the tar, "I'll teach you to treat a Rabbit like that. What do you think I've got two feet for?" And with that old Rabbit kicked the Tar Man, *bum,* with his left hind foot, and his foot stuck. "I've got another foot left," shouted old Rabbit, and with that he kicked the Tar Man, *bum,* with his right foot, and it stuck too.

"Now you'll see what is going to happen to you!" shouted old Rabbit, who could not have been any more angry than he was then, all stuck up with tar. "I'm going to butt you!" And with that, he butted the little Tar Man with his head as hard as he could, and his head

stuck. So old Rabbit was all stuck, his head, his back feet, and his front feet, to the little Tar Man. He couldn't say a word or move, and after a while along came the Fox in the full of the moon. He picked up old Rabbit and carried him home.

Old Coon was out enjoying the moon on his corn patch, and the Fox called to him, "Come along over, neighbor Coon?" said the Fox, "and see who I caught in my goobers!"

So old Coon came along over, and when he saw old Rabbit all stuck up with tar, he said to the Fox, "Now we've got that thief just where we want him. I'll tell you what we will do." Then old Coon took the Fox off into a corner and he whispered to him, "We'll give him his choice whether he wants to be cut up for stew, or thrown into the brier patch. And if he says he'd like to be stewed, then we'll throw him into the briers; and if he says briers, then we'll cut him up for stew." The Fox thought that this was a fine plan of old Coon's and they went back to tell old Rabbit about it.

"Which would you rather do for stealing my goobers?" the Fox asked old Rabbit, "because we are surely going to do one thing or the other to you. Would you like to be thrown

into the briers, or would you rather be cut up for stew?"

Then old Rabbit raised his voice and pleaded with his neighbors, the Fox and old Coon, "Please, oh, please," begged old Rabbit, "don't throw me into the brier patch and let me get all scratched up, but cut me up for stew. That's what I want to be, rabbit stew!"

So with that, the Fox and old Coon lifted old Rabbit up and flung him as far as they could into the brier patch. Then old Rabbit looked back at them, kicked up his heels, laughed, and off he hopped calling as he went, "Thank you, neighbors. I and all my family were born and raised in a brier patch. This was the right place to fling me." And off he went, lippity, lippity, lip, home!

THE LITTLE GOLD STONE

ONCE upon a time when the fishes, and the birds, and all the little creatures like the worms and the frogs and the snakes and the turtles, owned the earth, the king of them all for a year was the old mole. Now the mole heard about a little gold stone that lay in the bottom of the brook and that it would cure him of his blindness if only he could get it, but he couldn't do that, for he was the slowest moving man of them all.

So the mole offered to grant the dearest wish of anybody who would go to the brook and bring him that little gold stone, and everybody began hurrying to do it.

Of course the birds had the best chance, and when they were well on the way, they heard, swish, swish, the sound of swift wings, and they knew very well who it was. That was Nancy-Jane, the fastest flying bird of them all. They couldn't come anywhere near Nancy Jane, and she passed them with her head way up high, for she knew, too, that she was going to be the first one at the brook.

But after Nancy Jane had gone on ahead, the birds heard an old turtle, who was making his slow way along with all the rest of the gentlemen on the ground, speaking, "What's the use of hurrying?" asked the turtle, "when we will have to wait all summer until the brook runs dry before we can fetch that little gold stone?"

So they all knew that there was no use in going any farther that day, and most of them went home to attend to their affairs.

In those days, the crow was the trickiest of all the birds, and he called a council of them that very day to see what they could do with Nancy-Jane. "No matter how fast we fly," said the crow, "Nancy-Jane is bound to beat us. I propose that we give a feast and invite her to attend. I will supply all the corn. When we get her here, we can tie her up to a bush outside of the house where we will have her safe."

This seemed to be a very good plan, so they sent the lark on ahead to invite Nancy-Jane to the feast and while he was gone, they spread the table with the seeds that Nancy-Jane liked the most.

All this time, Nancy-Jane never suspected any trouble. Not seeing a bird or an animal

in sight, she decided to rest a while and when the lark caught up with her, there she was sleeping comfortably under a sweet gum tree and dreaming about carrying the little gold stone home to King Mole for the reward. The lark nudged Nancy-Jane on her shoulder and said loudly to her,

"We birds are going to give a big dinner, and eat most all the time from now until the brook runs dry. We are bound to get there first anyway, and we thought that we might as well enjoy ourselves while we are waiting. We don't plan to begin eating, though, until you can join us, Nancy-Jane. The other birds just sent me on ahead to say that they couldn't sit down to table without you."

So Nancy-Jane felt very much complimented. She thanked the lark, and then she flew, swish, swish, not waiting for him, even, and she did not stop until she was right in the middle of the table. The other birds pretended that they were very glad to see Nancy-Jane. They gave her some of all the different kinds of seeds they had, and just when she was enjoying herself, they caught her and tied her fast to a bush out in front of the house.

Poor Nancy-Jane! She could move neither wings nor feet. The other birds danced

around her on the tips of their toes and flapped their wings at her and called out, "Now will you beat us flying to the brook?" And pretty soon it was the end of the summer and they thought that it was a good time to start out again for the little gold stone.

So everybody started, and Nancy-Jane was left there alone. At least, she thought that she was alone. All day and all night she called out,

"Who'll untie, who'll untie, poor Nancy-Jane-O?"

"Who'll untie, who'll untie, poor Nancy-Jane-O?"

Now, way down under a big stone, where he had not heard any of these goings on, lived Pig-un-a-wa-ya, the old bull frog, but he heard poor Nancy-Jane, and he came out and asked her what was the matter with her.

"Why, Nancy-Jane, the fastest flying bird of them all!" said Pig-un-a-wa-ya, "What are you doing, tied to that bush?"

So Nancy-Jane told him all about it, and Pig-un-a-wa-ya, who was a calculating man, turned it over in his mind to see how he could get a little something out of it. At last he spoke to Nancy-Jane. "I was thinking about making a trip to the brook to get the gold

stone," Pig-un-a-wa-ya said to her, "but I'm such a fat, slow walking man that I knew there wouldn't be any use in my starting, even. But if you thought that you could carry me on your back, Nancy-Jane, I would untie you and we would be sure of beating them all. You, being such a swift flying bird, could go on ahead of them, and even if the brook was not all dried, I could jump down, ker-flunk, into the water and bring up the gold stone. We would have no trouble, Nancy-Jane, and we could divide the prize between us. How do you feel about it?"

Nancy Jane didn't want to share the gold stone with anyone. And she didn't want to be seen carrying old Pig-un-a-wa-ya on her back up there in the sky. Nancy Jane knew that she would look ridiculous. But she did not want to spend all her days tied there to a bush in front of the house, so she took up with Pig-un-a-wa-ya's offer and he untied her. Then he sat down on her back and off she flew, almost as fast as if she was not carrying him.

Pretty soon the swifter flying birds, who were in the lead on the way to the brook, heard a sound of wings, swish, swish, passing them. Then they saw Nancy-Jane with old Pig-un-a-wa-ya on her back, and they called out to her,

"Who untied, who untied, poor Nancy-Jane-O?"

And the bull frog, who was all excited to be flying through the air so fast, turned himself around and called back to them in a hoarse voice,

"Pig-un-a-wa-ya, Pig-un-a-wa-ya, hoo, hoo, hoo,
Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya are going to beat you!"

Then there was a race! All the birds put their best feet forward and the gentlemen on the ground did the same with theirs, but it didn't do a single bit of good. They might go on ahead for a little way, but in the end Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya gained on them, the old bull frog calling back to them every little while, between chuckles,

"Pig-un-a-wa-ya, Pig-un-a-wa-ya, hoo, hoo, hoo,
Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya are going to beat you!"

Well that was just what happened. Nancy Jane came first of all to the brook. Not one of all the others was in sight. The water was not

quite dried up and old Pig-un-a-wa-ya pretended that it would be very dangerous for Nancy Jane to so much as touch her feet to the water. Off her back he jumped, with a loud ker-flunk, into the brook, and up he came with the little gold stone in his mouth.

Nancy-Jane sat on a persimmon bush by the edge of the brook until she saw Pig-un-a-wa-ya hoist up his feet and rise out of the brook. Then she let him mount on her back again, and after that she began to get so proud that, man, she didn't know hardly what she was about! Round and round over the brook, Nancy-Jane flew with old Pig-un-a-wa-ya on her back, singing all the time,

"Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya, hoo, hoo, hoo,
Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya, done beat you!"

Well, when the other flying and crawling ones came up, Nancy-Jane flew round in circles faster and faster. She flew so fast that she got dizzy, but instead of starting on home, she just kept on circling. Old Pig-un-a-wa-ya had a hard time keeping his hold on Nancy-Jane's back, and he began to swell up larger and larger as he thought of the gold stone in his

mouth, which made it harder for him to stay on. He decided that he would sing too, with Nancy Jane, so he swelled out some more, drew in his breath to get ready, puffed it out, and out went the gold stone back into the brook!

And just then down went Nancy-Jane and Pig-un-a-wa-ya into the brook too, stuck fast in the mud, and they never got out again.

THE WISE LITTLE JACKAL

ONCE upon a time there was a wise little Jackal who lived all by himself in a little house in the wide Jungle. And the little house of the wise little Jackal was not very far from a river where there were crabs, so he used to go down every day to the river bank and eat crabs for his dinner.

But a huge and fierce Alligator lived in the mud of the river, and one day he lay dozing there in the sunshine with his nose just sticking up out of the water. And the little Jackal thought that the pink tip of the fierce Alligator's nose was a crab, so he bit it.

Oh, then there was a great lashing and foaming of the water as the huge and fierce Alligator came up and caught the little Jackal's tail tightly in his mouth. For he had made up his mind that he was going to eat up that little Jackal. It looked very badly indeed for the little Jackal, but at last he had a wise thought.

"Oh, great, and mighty Alligator," said the little Jackal, "did you think that you had

caught my tail in your fierce jaws? I am sorry to tell you about it, but all that you hold in your teeth is a long and fat root of the bulrushes that grow on the bank of the river."

"Well, I will get you yet," cried the huge and fierce Alligator, dropping his hold on the little Jackal's tail as he spoke. And with that, off ran the little Jackal, singing as he went,

"Stupid one, stupid one! Ring-a-ting-ting.
Silly old Alligator, didn't catch a thing!"

All the way through the Jungle to his house, the little Jackal sang, but he was very much frightened for all that. He remembered how wide were the Alligator's jaws, and how long he was, and how many sharp teeth he showed. He knew that the Alligator was very, very angry at being so outwitted, and that he could travel on land almost as well as in the water. So the little Jackal gave up his crab dinners and ate only figs, for there were many fig trees in the Jungle, and here he hoped to be safe. But one day, as he came to get his dinner, what did the little Jackal see but a large, neat, round pile of figs lying on the ground. It was a larger pile of figs than he had ever seen in his life. But he was a wise little Jackal, so he did

not touch one of the pile. Instead, he talked to himself in his soft, little voice, and he said, skipping away from the pile,

"I would never think of eating figs from so large a pile as that. They could never be fresh. The figs that I love are those that drop down from the tree, one at a time, and are blown along the ground by the wind."

Then there came a great noise from the pile of figs, and out from under them came the huge and fierce Alligator, his teeth showing, and waddling along on his short fat legs. He was very, very angry, but the little Jackal was too far away for him to catch him. And the Jackal called out to him,

"Stupid one, stupid one! Ring-a-ting-ting.
Silly old Alligator, didn't catch a thing!"

All the way through the Jungle to his house, the little Jackal sang, but he was very much frightened still. He knew that if the Alligator had traveled from the river bank to the fig tree to catch him, he might come farther still. So the poor little Jackal stayed at home all the time after that, and ate only roots and berries, and he grew very thin indeed.

And one day, when the poor little Jackal was

so thin and weak that he could scarcely walk, he came back to his little house, and he saw some unusual marks around the door. The bamboo wood was scratched and bent as if someone too large had gone in through the door. Oh, how frightened the little Jackal was then! But he was not going to show his fear. No, indeed. He just stood on the outside of the door, and spoke to his little house,

"Little House, little House," said the Jackal, "what is the matter with you? Never before, when I came home from the Jungle have you failed to say to me, 'all is well.' Has anything happened inside of you?"

Then the huge, and fierce Alligator, who had squeezed himself in through the door, and lay in wait inside for the little Jackal, made his voice small and soft, and said,

"All is well with me, little Jackal."

And that was just what the Jackal wanted to know. He hurried to the Jungle and gathered a great deal of dry brush and the branches of trees and brought them back with him. He made several trips until he had enough wood for a large fire, and he piled it in front of the door of his house. Then he lighted it, and when the Alligator, who couldn't stand smoke, came out to get the air, he was all

burned up, and the little Jackal danced around the fire and sang,

"Stupid old Alligator, ring-a-ting-ting.
Silly old Alligator. Didn't catch a thing."

And then the little Jackal went down to the river and ate crabs, and on the way home he ate figs, and he grew very fat and happy again.

HOW JAY BIRD GOT HIS DESERTS

ONCE upon a time, Miss Robin was the belle of the whole wild wood, but the bird who courted her the most was Jay Bird. Every day Jay Bird came to call on Miss Robin, bringing her ripe berries and worms, and trying to sing in tune for her. Miss Robin seemed mighty pleased with all this attention from Jay Bird. She ate his worms and berries. She complimented him on his voice, and once in a while she would go walking with Jay Bird, but she never let him say anything to her about building a nest together. Oh, no, Miss Robin wasn't going to say anything about that to Jay Bird.

So Jay Bird began to get discouraged about the way Miss Robin was treating him, and he made up his mind that he was going to build a new house anyway, and then, maybe, when it was all done, he could persuade Miss Robin to share it with him. Jay Bird went to work gathering sticks, and one day when he was laying them together, he thought that he heard

something down in the path under the tree where he was working. Jay Bird looked down between the leaves so that nobody could see him, and there was Miss Robin walking out with Woodpecker. She was speaking just as pleasantly to Woodpecker as she always had to Jay Bird, and Woodpecker was gathering berries for her.

Wasn't Jay Bird mad! He scolded so hard up there in the tree that all the birds of the wild wood were scared, and he made up his mind that he was going to get even with Woodpecker.

In those days Woodpecker was one of the most handsome birds in the whole wild wood. He wore a black suit, just like the Crow's, and he had a topknot like the topknot the Rooster wears. Woodpecker brushed his clothes and polished his cap every Sunday. He was one of the best looking of all Miss Robin's beaus. That made Jay Bird dislike him all the more.

So Jay Bird took some of the longest sticks that he had gathered for his nest and he nailed them together just the way he had seen the farmer nail his fence. But between the lowest stick and the next one, Jay Bird left space so that a bird could get through. He propped up the stick that was next to the bottom with

a chip so that it would fall, just like a trap, if the chip was knocked out. Then Jay Bird crawled through the fence himself, carefully, so as not to spring his trap.

Pretty soon, when he heard Woodpecker's hammer going rap-a-tap-tap on a tree so he knew that he was through promenading with Miss Robin, Jay Bird followed the sound. He found Woodpecker half way up a tree, and he spoke to him like a gentleman, asking how his work was going, and if he would be through by five o'clock.

Woodpecker stopped hammering long enough to pass the time of day with Jay Bird and say that he expected to finish his job by five o'clock.

"I was planning to give a small dinner party, Mr. Woodpecker," Jay Bird told him, trying to keep his voice from screeching, "and I was lotting on having you there. It is going to be a worm dinner," he said, "particularly in honor of Miss Robin."

Woodpecker said he would be complimented to come, and Jay Bird went on to Miss Robin's. She was pretty cold to Jay Bird, but when he told her about the worm dinner he was giving that evening, and how Woodpecker would be there, Miss Robin warmed up quite a little, and

she said to Jay Bird, in a kind of a coaxing way, "Don't you think Mr. Peckerwood is a very handsome man?"

Peckerwood was a kind of pet name that Miss Robin had for Woodpecker and it made Jay Bird hopping mad to hear her call him that, but he kept his feelings to himself as far as he could. "It all depends on what you call handsome, Miss Robin," Jay Bird said. "For myself, I prefer a little color in a suit of clothes. This evening, then, ma'am?" And Jay Bird went home to gather worms.

Well, when dinner time came that evening, Jay Bird sat on his front porch just as if he was expecting company, and soon along came Woodpecker, his clothes brushed just as if it were Sunday, and his topknot standing up in the air. He was in such a hurry to get to Miss Robin's dinner party that he didn't lose any time looking where he was going. The first thing he knew he walked right into Jay Bird's new fence. The rail came down, for Woodpecker had knocked out the chip, and there he was caught by his head in the crack!

Jay Bird started right in making fun of Woodpecker, and laughing at him. "Now I've got you just where I want you, Mr. Peckerwood!" Jay Bird called to him. "You will

promenade with Miss Robin, and gather berries for her, will you? Well, pretty soon she will be coming along, but by that time her dinner will be in the pot. Boiled Peckerwood! That is what Miss Robin is going to eat for dinner!" And with those cruel words, Jay Bird went around to the back of his house to fetch his axe.

But he had been gone only a minute when along came Miss Robin, and when she saw Woodpecker with his neck caught in the fence, she asked him how it happened, and Woodpecker, in a faint voice, told her all about it. He told her how Jay Bird was probably sharpening his axe now, and Miss Robin fluttered around in her best feathers and tried to lift off the rail from her Peckerwood.

She pulled and she pulled, but the rail was too heavy for her, and all the time they could hear Jay Bird's grind-stone creaking around at the back of his house. Then Miss Robin thought of something else to do, and she braced herself against a stone, took hold of Woodpecker's feet, and pulled, and pulled, and pulled. After a while, straining, and tugging, and nearly losing her breath, Miss Robin got Woodpecker through, but he had to leave his topknot in the crack in the rail fence.

Miss Robin didn't care a bit about that, and neither did Woodpecker. She held his head in her lap, and the blood from her breast where she had torn it on a nail in the fence dripped down on Woodpecker's black cap and turned it a bright red. He has worn a red cap ever since then. And Miss Robin wears a red breast.

Just then Jay Bird came around the corner of his house with his axe under his wing, but Miss Robin just made up a face at him, and flew off home, taking the Peckerwood with her. His mean ways never did Jay Bird a bit of good, for Miss Robin would not speak to him after that. And Woodpecker's new red cap was very much admired in the wild wood.

THE FOX AND THE CRAB

THE Crab lay in the warm sand of the beach and thought how pleasant and indolent was his life. "There is nothing in all the sea for me to desire," he said to himself, "or on the land either, for that matter," but just as the Crab had these thoughts, he was surprised. Down the beach ran a Fox, swiftly, his brush of a tail held high in the air, and his red nose turned up scornfully.

He sat down beside the Crab and began to make fun of him, "One, two, three, four—but I cannot count all your legs, Mr. Crab," said the Fox, "and yet here you lie, stupid and lazy, in the sun, not able to walk even as fast as I can. Did you ever run a race?"

"I never have had any occasion to run a race, Mr. Fox," replied the Crab. "Some of us are fiddlers, and some of us are able to walk sideways, but we have never been invited to take part in sports. I have no doubt but that I could run, though, if I had to."

"Then race with me," said the crafty Fox.

"That would be a race! I am so famous for my speed that whole parties of huntsmen on horseback, and packs of hunting dogs are not able to catch me unless I let them. Race with me, old Crab! You ought to win, I am sure, for you have two or three times as many legs as I. Let me see you use them," and the Fox laughed behind his paw at his own joke.

The Crab thought for a moment. Then he looked at the Fox's long and bushy tail.

"I may have more legs than you, Mr. Fox," said the Crab at last, "but even so, it would not be an equal race, because of your tail. It acts like a sail, and balances, and speeds you along as you run. I will race with you if you will allow me to fasten down your tail before we start. I could do it very neatly by tying it to your fur with my claws. What do you say to the plan, sir?"

"I say that it is a very good plan," said the Fox, scornfully. "Tie my tail down as tightly as you like, and see how little I need it when I run. My great speed is in my legs. But have your way, I am willing."

So the Fox allowed the Crab to tie down his tail to his fur, and then they were off. The Fox ran like the wind. His red fur was like a line of bright flame along the beach, so

quickly did he go. He did not trouble to turn back, for he had not heard the Crab's feet once behind him. "Silly little creature," thought the Fox as he turned at the end of the beach and ran back to the starting point, "to think that, with all his many legs, he could excel me in speed. I shall pick him up somewhere near the starting point, I suppose, tired out."

But, instead, the Crab gave a last leap, and reached the goal a lap ahead of the Fox. He had fastened himself to the Fox's tail, and the Fox had carried him all the way, and at last to victory.

SON-OF-A-BRAVE'S BALLOON

WHEN Son-of-a-Brave was ten years old he felt that no other boy of the tribe was so important as he.

The village medicine man had made him a string of carved wampum to wear about his neck and keep him safe when he was out hunting. The chief huntsman of the tribe had given him a long bow and arrow tipped with the brightest feathers. As Son-of-a-Brave kneeled upon the ground, aimed, and snapped his bow string the arrow would sail up, up, above the tree tops until it seemed almost as if it would reach the home of the eagle on a far away mountain top.

He had a drum and pipes with which to make music as the village warriors went out to battle or returned home. He had the finest beaded moccasins, the softest doe-skin suit, and the brightest colored blanket of any boy in the village. His father had ordered a canoe, especially light and swift, to be made for him. Because of all these gifts Son-of-a-Brave con-

tinually wanted others. He grew discontented, and longed for toys that no Indian lad could have. At last he had a strange desire that made the old braves and his own father shake their heads in wonder and despair.

"I want a large white cloud," Son-of-a-Brave decided. "I will have a cloud. I could fasten it to the bow of my canoe and use it for a sail to save me the trouble of paddling. Or I could play ball with it in front of the lodge with the other boys; not one of them would have so great and fine a ball as I."

"The clouds were created to hang in the sky," the medicine man warned Son-of-a-Brave. "The Great Spirit put them there and there they must stay. When anything is out of its place in the world there is apt to be great trouble in consequence. Do not meddle with the clouds, Son-of-a-Brave."

But the boy paid not the slightest attention to the warning of this wise old man. One day he started out with provisions for a journey packed in his canoe, and he said that the tribe would not see him again until he returned with a cloud.

Son-of-a-Brave paddled up the stream until he was far away from the camp and near to the source of the waters. Then he tied the

canoe to a tree and set out on foot, climbing higher all the time up the side of a mountain. After many days of hard traveling he reached the top. There, on the brow of the mountain, lay a great, white cloud. Although it was large it was very light, and Son-of-a-Brave put it on his back and went down the mountain. He found his canoe and tied the cloud to the bow of it. Oh, it was a wonderful sight there and filled Son-of-a-Brave's heart with pride. The wind filled it and the canoe rode the stream like a bird floating through the air. It was like nothing so much as the biggest balloon in the world. Son-of-a-Brave thought he would be able to catch hold of it when he wished and sail up to the sky.

"I will tie it back of our lodge," he decided, "and allow no one to touch it but myself. I shall have a new name, Son-of-a-Brave-Who-Owns-a-Cloud!"

In his fancy he could see the light of camp fires and hear the shouts of the braves as they had a feast and gave him his new name.

So Son-of-a-Brave sailed swiftly down the stream, and almost before he realized it he could see the poles of the lodges of his village showing through the trees. He shouted loudly to call the tribe down to the water's edge to see

his triumph. They came running, the old and the young braves, the squaws, and the boys and girls his own age. They stood speechless when they saw the cloud. And Son-of-a-Brave jumped out of his canoe and prepared to take the cloud off and onto land.

But he was in too great haste. The cloud caught in a bush on the edge of the stream and, just as a balloon bursts if a pin is stuck in it, the cloud burst. It burst in a fog, and that is how, the Indians tell us, the first fog came.

TOM TIT TOT

ONCE upon a time, there was a woman and she baked five pies. And when they came out of the oven, they were that overbaked the crusts were too hard to eat. So she said to her daughter:

"Daughter," she said, "put those pies on the shelf, and leave 'em there a little and they'll come again." She meant, you know, that the crusts would get soft.

But the girl said to herself: "Well, if they'll come again, I'll eat 'em now." And she set to work and ate them all, first and last.

Well, come supper time, the woman said: "Go you, and get one of those pies. I dare say they've come again now."

The girl went and she looked, and there was nothing but the dishes. So back she came and said: "No, they've not come again."

"Not one of them?" asked the mother.

"Not one of them," said she.

"Well, come again, or not come again," said the mother, "I'll have one for supper."

"But you can't if they haven't come," said the girl.

"But I can," said she, "Go you, and bring me the best one."

"Best or worst," said the girl, "I've eaten them all, and you can't have one."

Well, the woman was surprised, and she took her spinning to the door, and as she spun she sang:

"My daughter has eaten five, five pies today!
My daughter has eaten five, five pies today!"

The king was coming down the street and he heard her song, but what the words were he couldn't hear, so he stopped and said:

"What was that you were singing, my good woman?"

The woman was ashamed to let him hear what her daughter had been doing, so she sang instead of the first words:

"My daughter has spun five, five skeins today!
My daughter has spun five, five skeins today!"

"Stars-o-mine," said the king, "I never heard tell of any one who could do that!"

Then he said: "Look you here; I want a wife and I will marry your daughter. But," said he, "eleven months out of the year she

shall have all that she wants to eat, and all the gowns she wants to wear, and all the company she likes to keep; but the last month of the year, she'll have to spin five skeins every day or I will have her banished."

"All right," said the woman, for she thought what a fine marriage it would be. And as for the five skeins, why, when the time came, there would be plenty of ways of getting out of that; and very likely the king would have forgotten about them himself.

Well, so they were married. And for eleven months the girl had all that she wanted to eat, and all the gowns she wanted to wear, and all the company she liked to keep. But when the time was getting over, she began to think about the skeins and to wonder if the king had them in mind. But not one word did he say, and she decided that he had wholly forgotten them.

However, the last day of the month he took her to a room she'd never set foot in before. There was nothing in it but a spinning wheel and a stool and some flax. And the king said: "Now, my dear, here you'll be shut in tomorrow with some victuals and if you haven't spun five skeins by night, out of the kingdom you'll go."

And away he went about his business.

Well, she was that frightened, she'd always been such an idle, careless girl, that she didn't know what to do. She didn't know how to spin, and what would she do on the morrow with no one to come nigh and help her? She sat down on a stool in the kitchen, and how she did cry!

However, all of a sudden she heard a sort of knocking low on the door. She opened it, and who should she see but a small, little black thing with a long tail! It looked at her right curious, and it said:

"What are you a-crying for?"

"What's that to you?" said she.

"Never you mind," it said, "but tell me what you're a-crying for?"

"That won't do me any good," said she.

"You don't know that," it said and twirled its tail about.

"Well," said she at last, "it won't do any harm if it doesn't do any good," and she up and told about the pies, and the skeins, and everything.

"Well, this is what I'll do," said the little black thing, "I'll come to your window every morning and take the flax and bring it back all spun at night."

"What's your pay?" said she.

The small, little black thing looked at her out of the corner of its eye, and it said: "I'll give you three guesses every night to guess my name, and if you haven't guessed it before the month's up you shall be mine!"

Well, she thought that she would be sure to guess its name before the month was up. "All right," said she, "I'll agree."

The next day the king took her into the room, and there was the flax and the day's food.

"Now, there is the flax," said he, "and if it isn't spun by night, out you go." And then he went out and locked the door.

He had hardly gone when there came a knocking against the window.

She up and she opened it, and sure enough, there was the little old black thing sitting on the ledge.

"Where's the flax?" said it.

"Here it be," said she and she gave it to it.

Well, come the evening a knocking came again against the window. She up and she opened it, and there was the little old black thing with five skeins of spun flax on his arm. "Here it be," it said, and it gave it to her. "Now, what's my name?" said it.

"Is it Bill?" said she.

"No, it isn't," said it, and it twirled its tail.

"Is it Ned?" said she.

"No, it isn't," said it, and it twirled its tail.

"Well, then it's Mark," said she.

"*No.* it isn't," said it, and it twirled its tail harder and away it flew.

When the king came in there were the five skeins ready for him. "I see I shan't have to banish you tonight, my dear," said he, "You'll have your food and more flax in the morning."

Every day the food and the flax were brought, and every day, morning and evening, the little black imp came. And all the day the girl sat trying to think of names to say to it when it came at night. But she never hit on the right one. And as it came toward the end of the month, the imp began to look maliceful, and twirled its tail faster and faster each time she gave a wrong guess.

Well, it came to the last day but one. The imp came at night with the five skeins, and it said: "Haven't you got my name yet?"

"Is it Nicodemus?" said she.

"No, it isn't," said it.

"Is it Sammle?" said she.

"No, it isn't," said it.

"Ah—well—then it's Methusalem," said she.

"*No,* it isn't," said it. Then it looked at her with its eyes like coals of fire, and it said: "There's only tomorrow night, and then you'll be mine!" And away it flew.

Well, she felt horrid. However, she heard the king coming along the passage. In he came, and when he saw the five skeins he said: "Well, my dear," said he. "I don't see but what you'll have your skeins ready tomorrow night as well, and as I reckon I shall not have to banish you, I'll have supper in here to-night." So they brought supper, and another stool for him, and down the two sat.

He had eaten but a mouthful or two, when he stopped to laugh.

"What is it?" said she.

"Why," said he, "I was out hunting today, and I got away to a place in the woods where I had never been before. And there was an old chalk-pit. I heard a sort of humming, and so I got off my horse, and I went softly to the pit, and I looked down in. Well, what should there be there but the funniest little black

thing you ever set eyes upon. And what was it doing, but sitting beside a little spinning-wheel and spinning wonderfully fast, all the while twirling its tail. And as it spun, it sang:

"Nimmy, nimmy, not,
My name's Tom Tit Tot."

Well, when the girl heard this, she felt as if she must jump for joy, but she didn't say a word.

The next day the little small black thing looked most maliceful when it came for the flax. And when night came she heard it knocking against the window panes. She opened the window, and it came right in on the ledge. It was grinning from ear to ear, and Oo! its tail was twirling round fast and hard.

"What's my name?" it asked, giving her the skeins spitefully.

"Is it Solomon?" said she, pretending to be afraid.

"No, it isn't," it said coming farther into the room.

"Well, is it Zebedee?" said she again.

"No, it isn't," said the imp. And then it

laughed and twirled its tail until you could hardly see it. "Take time," it said, "next guess and you're mine!" And it stretched out its little black hands at her.

Well, she backed a step or two, and she looked at it and she said, pointing her finger at it:

"Nimmy, nimmy, not,
Your name's Tom Tit Tot!"

Well, when he heard that, Tom Tit Tot gave a terrible shriek, and away he flew into the dark, and she never saw him again.

THE WOLF AND THE SEVEN LITTLE GOSLINGS

THERE was once an old goose who had seven young goslings, and loved them as only a mother can love her children. One day she was going into the woods to look for food, and before setting out she called all seven to her and said: "Dear children, I am obliged to go into the wood, so be on your guard against the wolf, for if he gets you he will eat you up, feathers, skin, and all. The villain often disguises himself, but you can easily recognize him by his rough voice and his black paws."

"We will take great care, Mother," the young goslings answered. "You may go with no fear." So the old lady was comforted, and set off cheerfully for the wood.

But she had not been gone very long when someone knocked on the door, and cried: "Open, open, my dear children. Your mother is here and has brought something for each one of you."

But the goslings soon understood, by the rough voice, that it was the wolf. "We will not open," they said. "You are not our mother, for she has a sweet and lovely voice, while your voice is rough—you are the wolf!"

So the wolf set off to a merchant and bought a large lump of chalk which he ate to make his voice sweet. Back he came, knocked at the door, and cried: "Open, open, my dear children. Your mother is here and has brought something for each one of you."

But the wolf had laid his black paw on the window-sill, and when the goslings saw it, they cried: "We will not open. Our mother has not such black feet as that—you are the wolf."

So the wolf ran off to the baker and said: "I have hurt my foot; put some dough on it." And when the baker had plastered the wolf's paw with dough, he went to the miller and said: "Strew some meal on my paws."

But the miller thought to himself, "This wolf wants to deceive someone," and hesitated. At this the wolf became fierce: "If you do not at once cover my paws with meal I will eat you up!" he growled. So the miller was afraid and whitened his paws.

Then the rogue came back a third time, knocking softly at the door, and calling:

"Open the door, dear children. Your mother has come home and has brought something for each one of you."

"Show us your feet," cried the little goslings, "that we may see for ourselves if you are our mother."

So the wolf laid his paws on the window-sill, and when the goslings saw that they were white, they believed that it was safe to open the door. And who should come in but the old wolf!

They screamed out and tried to hide themselves. One jumped under the table, another into bed, the third into the oven, the fourth ran into the kitchen, the fifth hopped into a chest, the sixth under the washtub, and the seventh hid in the clock-case. But the wolf seized them, and stood on no ceremony with them. One after another he ate them up, all except the seventh gosling who had slipped into the clock-case and the wolf had not been able to find. When the wolf had gobbled his fill of goslings, he strolled out, laid himself down in a green meadow under a tree, and went fast asleep.

Not long after, back came the old goose from the wood, but what, alas, did she see! The house door was wide open. Table, chairs,

benches, were all overthrown. The wash-tub lay in the ashes. Blankets and pillows were torn off the bed. She looked for the children, but nowhere could she find them. She called each one by name, but there came no answer. At last, as she called the youngest, a little squeeking voice answered, "Here I am, dear Mother, in the clock-case." She pulled the youngest gosling out, and he told her how the wolf had come and had eaten up the others. How she wept for her dear children!

At last, the old goose went outside, and with her went the gosling who was left. And when she came to the meadow, there lay the wolf under the tree, snoring until the boughs shook. She walked round and examined him on all sides, until she saw that something was moving and kicking about inside him.

"Can it be," she thought, "that my poor children whom he swallowed for his supper are still alive?" So she sent the youngest gosling back to the house for scissors, needle, and thread, and she began to slit up the monster's stomach.

Scarcely had she given one snip when out came the head of a gosling, and when she had cut a little farther, out jumped the six, not in the least hurt, because the greedy monster had

swallowed them whole. That was a joy! They hugged their mother, and then skipped off as gay as a tailor at a wedding.

But the old goose stopped them. "Go and fetch me six large stones," she said, "to put inside the greedy beast while he is still asleep."

So the goslings got the stones in all haste, and they put them inside the wolf. And the old goose sewed him up again in a great hurry, while he never moved or took any notice.

Now when the wolf at last woke up and got upon his legs, he found he was very thirsty, and wished to go to the spring for a drink. But as soon as he began to move the stones began to shake and rattle inside him until he cried:

"What's this rumbling and tumbling
What's this rattling like bones?
I thought I had eaten six little geese,
But they've turned out only stones!"

And when the wolf came to the spring and bent his head to take a drink, the heavy stones overbalanced him, and in he went, head over heels.

THE CAT AND THE MOUSE IN PARTNERSHIP

A CAT, having made the acquaintance of a mouse, professed such great love and friendship for her that the mouse at last agreed that they should live and keep house together.

"We must make provision for the winter," said the cat, "or we shall suffer from hunger and you, little mouse, must not stir out or you will be caught in a trap."

So they took counsel together and bought a little pot of fat. And then they could not tell where to put it for safety, but after long consideration the cat said that there could be no better place than the church, for nobody would steal it there. They would put it in the church and not touch it until they were really in want. So this was done, and the little pot placed in safety.

But before long, the cat was seized with a great wish to taste it.

"Listen to me, little mouse," said he, "I have been asked by my cousin to stand god-

father to a little son she has just had. He is white with brown spots, and they want to have the christening today, so let me go to it, while you stay at home to mind the house."

"Oh, yes, certainly," replied the mouse, "pray go by all means; and while you are feasting on all the good things, do think of me. I should so like some of them."

But there was not a word of truth in all this. The cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to stand godfather. He went to the church, straight up to the little pot, and licked the fat off the top. Then he took a walk over the roofs of the town, saw his acquaintances, stretched himself in the sun, and licked his whiskers as often as he thought of the little pot of fat. And when it was evening he went home.

"Here you are at last," said the mouse. "I expect that you have had a merry time."

"Oh, pretty well," answered the cat.

"And what name did you give the child?" asked the mouse.

"Top-Off," answered the cat drily.

"Top-Off," cried the mouse, "is that a common name in your family? It is a very singular name."

"What does that matter?" answered the

cat. "It's not any worse than Crumb-Picker, the name of one of your god children."

A little time after this, the cat was seized with another longing.

"Again I must ask you," said he to the mouse, "to do me a favor and keep house alone for a day. I have been asked a second time to stand godfather; and as the little one has a white ring around its neck, I can't very well refuse."

So the kind little mouse consented, and the cat crept along under the shadow of the town wall until he reached the church, and going straight to the little pot of fat devoured half of it.

"Nothing tastes so well as what one keeps to oneself," said he, feeling quite contented with his day's work. When he reached home, the mouse asked what name had been given to the child.

"Half-Gone," answered the cat.

"Half-Gone!" said the mouse. "I never heard such a name in my life. I don't believe it is to be found in any book, for that matter."

But the cat said nothing, and soon after that his mouth began to water again for the fat.

"Good things always come in threes," he said to the mouse. "Again I have been asked to

stand godfather. The little one is quite black with white feet, and not a white hair on its body. Such a thing does not happen every day, and you will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-Off, Half-Gone," murmured the mouse, "they are both such curious names, I cannot but wonder at them!"

"That," replied the cat, "is because you always sit at home in your little grey frock and hairy tail, never seeing the world, and fancying all sorts of things."

So the little mouse cleaned up the house and set it all in order. Meanwhile the greedy cat went and made an end of the little pot of fat.

"Now all is finished one's mind will be easy," said he, and came home in the evening quite sleek and comfortable. The mouse asked at once what name had been given the third child.

"You won't appreciate it any better than the others," replied the cat. "It is called All-Gone."

"All-Gone!" cried the mouse. "What an unheard of name! I never heard anything like it! All-Gone, whatever can it mean?" And shaking her head, she curled herself around and went to sleep. After that, the cat was not asked to stand godfather.

When the winter had come and there was nothing more to be had out of doors, the mouse began to think of their stores. "Come, cat," she said, "we will fetch our little pot of fat. How good it will taste, to be sure!"

"Of course it will," said the cat, "just as good as if you stuck your tongue out of the window!"

So they set out, and when they reached the place, they found the pot, but it was standing empty.

"Oh, now I see what it all meant," said the mouse. "Now I see what kind of a partner you have been! Instead of standing godfather you have devoured it all up. First, Top-Off; then Half-Gone, then—"

"Will you hold your tongue?" screamed the cat, "another word, and I will devour you."

But the poor little mouse, having All-Gone on the tip of her tongue, out it came, and the cat pounced upon her and ate her, too.

THE VAGABONDS

THE cock said to the hen, "It is nutting time, let us go together to the mountains and have a good feast for once, before the squirrels come and carry it all away."

"Yes," answered the hen, "we will have a jolly time together."

So they set off to the mountains, and as it was a fine day they stayed until evening. Now whether it was because they had eaten so much, or because of their pride and haughtiness, I do not know, but they would not go home on foot. So the cock went to work to make a little carriage out of nutshells. And when it was ready, the hen seated herself in it and said to the cock,

"Now you can harness yourself to it."

"That's all very fine," said the cock, "I would sooner go home on foot than do such a thing; and what is more, I never agreed to it. I don't mind being a coachman and sitting on the box, but as to drawing it myself, it's out of the question."

As they were wrangling, a duck came quacking along.

"You thieving vagabonds!" said the duck. "What do you mean by coming here uninvited to my mountain? Look out, or it will be the worse for you," and the duck flew at the cock with her mouth open. But the cock was not backward and he gave the duck a good whack in the body, and hacked her with his spurs so valiantly that she begged for mercy, and willingly allowed herself to be harnessed to the carriage. Then the cock seated himself on the box and was coachman. Off they went at a great pace, the cock crying out, "Run, duck, as fast as you can!"

When they had gone a part of the way, they met two foot passengers, a pin and a needle. They cried, "Stop, stop!" saying that it would soon be blindman's holiday; that they could not go an inch farther; that the road was very muddy; and might they ride for just a little way?

The cock, seeing that they were slender folk who would not take up a great deal of room, let them both step into the little nut carriage, only they had to promise not to tread on his toes, or on the hen's.

Late in the evening they came to an inn, and

there they found that they could not go any farther that night, as the duck's paces were not good, for she waddled so much from side to side. So they turned in. The landlord at first made some difficulty. His house was full already, and he thought they had the appearance of vagabonds; at last, however, when they had made many fine speeches, and had promised him the egg that the hen planned to lay shortly, and had also promised him the duck, who laid one every day, he agreed to let them stay the night. And they did so, having a gay time.

Early in the morning as it was beginning to grow light, but no one was awake, the cock called the hen, fetched her egg, made a hole in it, and they ate it up between them, throwing the shell on the hearth. Then they went up to the needle, who was still sleeping, picked him up by his head, and placed him in the inn keeper's chair cushion. Placing the pin in his towel, off they flew over the hills and far away. The duck, who had chosen to sleep in the open air, and so had remained in the yard heard the rustling of their wings, and, waking up, looked about for a brook. Down this she swam a good deal faster than she had drawn the little nut carriage.

A few hours later, the inn keeper awoke and, leaving his feather bed, began washing himself. But when he took the towel to dry himself, he drew the pin all the way across his face, and made a red streak from one ear to the other. Then he went into the kitchen to light his pipe, but when he stooped towards the hearth to take up a coal, the egg shell flew up into his eyes.

"Everything goes wrong this morning!" he said and, full of vexation, he let himself drop into the grandfather's chair; but up he jumped in a moment crying, "Oh, dear!" for the needle had gone into him.

Now the inn keeper became angry, and had his suspicions that his guests who had arrived so late the night before were nothing but vagabonds. It was true. When he looked for them they were gone. And the inn keeper decided that he would never harbor a cock and a hen, with their companions, again.

THE TOWN MUSICIANS

THERE was once a man who owned a donkey, who had carried his sacks industriously to the mill for many years, but whose strength had come to an end, so that the poor beast grew more and more unfit for work. The master determined to stop his food, but the donkey, discovering this, ran away and took the road to Bremen. "There," he thought, "I can turn into a Town Musician!"

When he had gone a little way, he found a hound lying in the road and panting, like one who is tired from running. "Hallo! What are you panting so for, worthy Sieze'em?" asked the donkey.

"Ah," said the dog, "just because I am old and growing weaker every day, and cannot go out hunting any longer, my master was going to kill me. So I have taken leave of him, but how shall I gain my living now?"

"I'll tell you what," said the donkey, "I am going to Bremen to be a Town Musician. Come with me and take to music, too. I will

play the flute and you can beat the drum."

The dog liked the idea, and they travelled on. It was not long before they saw a cat sitting beside the road and making a face like three rainy days.

"Now, then, what has gone wrong with you, old Whiskers?" asked the donkey.

"Who can be merry when his neck is in danger?" asked the cat. "Because I am advanced in years and my teeth are blunt and I like to sit by the fire and purr better than chasing rats, my mistress planned to drown me. I have managed to escape, but good advice is scarce. Tell me where I shall go."

"Come with us to Bremen," said the donkey. "You understand serenading; you also can become a Town Musician."

The cat thought this a capital idea and went along with them. Soon after, the three runaways came to a barnyard, and there sat a cock on the gate, crowing with might and main.

"You crow loudly enough to deafen one," said the donkey. "What is the matter with you?"

"I prophesied fair weather," said the cock, "because it is our good mistress' washing day; but because tomorrow will be Sunday and company is coming, the mistress has no pity

on me. She has told the cook to cut off my head tonight and put me in the soup tomorrow. Now I am crowing for the last time, and as loudly as I can."

"Oh, you old Redhead," said the donkey, "you had better come with us. We are going to Bremen where you are bound to find something much better to do than having your head cut off. You seem to have a good voice, and if we all make music, as Town Musicians, it is bound to be striking."

The cock liked the proposal and they all went along together.

But they were not able to reach the town of Bremen in one day and they came, in the evening, to a wood where they decided to spend the night. The donkey and the dog laid themselves down under a big tree, but the cat and the cock went higher, the cock flying up to the topmost branches where he would be safest.

Before the cock went to sleep, he looked all around toward the four points of the compass, and he thought that he saw a spark shining in the distance. He called to his companions that there must be a house, for he could see the light in the window. The donkey said, "Then we must rise and go to it, for the lodgings here are very poor."

The dog said, "Yes, a few bones with a little meat on them would be welcome."

So they took the road in the direction from which the light came and soon saw it shining brighter. It grew more and more brilliant until they came to a brightly illuminated robbers' house. The donkey, being the biggest of the travellers, got up to the window and looked in.

"What do you see, Greybeard?" asked the cock.

"What do I see?" replied the donkey, "I see a table covered with delicious food and drink, and robbers sitting around it enjoying themselves."

The animals consulted together as to how they might drive out the robbers and at last they settled upon a plan. The donkey was to place himself with his forefeet on the window-sill, the dog was to climb on the donkey's back, the cat on the dog's, and at the last the cock was to fly up and place himself on the head of the cat. When that was done, at a signal, they began their music all together. The donkey brayed, the dog barked, the cat mewed, and the cock crowed. Then, with one great smash, they dashed through the window into the room, the glass clattering as they came.

At this dreadful noise the robbers jumped up thinking that nothing less than a ghost was upon them, and they ran away into the wood in the greatest fright. The four friends then sat themselves down at the table, quite content with the food that was left, and they ate as if they were expecting to fast for at least a month to come.

When the four musicians had finished, they put out the light and each one looked for a suitable and comfortable place to sleep. The donkey lay down in the garden, the dog behind the door, the cat on the hearth near the warm ashes, and the cock perched himself on the hen roost. They were all tired after their long journey and were soon fast asleep.

Soon after midnight the robbers, watching from a distance, saw that the house was dark, and as all seemed quiet, the captain said, "We ought not to allow ourselves to be frightened so easily." And he sent one of the band to examine the house.

The messenger, finding everything quiet, went into the kitchen to light a candle and thinking that the cat's fiery eyes were live coals, he held a match to them to light it. But the cat did not understand the joke; up she flew in his face, biting and scratching him.

He was dreadfully frightened, ran away, and was going out of the back door when the dog who was lying there jumped up and bit his leg. As he ran through the garden, the donkey gave him a good kick with his hind foot; and the cock, being awakened, called out loudly from the hen house, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

The robber ran as hard as he could back to the captain of the band, and said, "Oh, dear, in the house sits a terrible old witch, who blew at me and scratched my face with her long fingers. And by the door stands a man with a knife, who stabbed me in the leg. In the yard lies a black monster who attacked me with a club, and up on the roof sits a judge who called out, 'Bring the rascal up here!' so I made the best of my way back here."

From that time the robbers never trusted themselves again in the house. But the four musicians liked it so well that they could not make up their minds to leave it, and they lived out their lives there in peace and plenty.

MERRY-HEART'S PARTY

MERRY-HEART, the smallest elf, had decided to give a party.

You know Merry-Heart, of course, for you heard him calling out in the garden yesterday when everyone else thought that it was only the chirping of a cricket. You saw him flying over the garden wall in his new green suit, although others saw just a green dragon fly. And he came back at dusk with his lantern and bobbed about among the flowers just as the fire flies do.

But you didn't know why Merry-Heart chuckled. He had just moved into his new house under the lilac bush where there was a big toadstool dining table and several little toadstools to sit upon. The lilac flowers made a roof and leaves made curtains. It was just the place for a party, a house-warming party.

That was why Merry-Heart chuckled with happiness.

And you did not know, either, why Merry-Heart flew away over the garden wall and was gone all day long, but this is why. He went to order the goodies for his party, and he had to go quite a long distance for some of them. If you had seen Merry-Heart's pantry when he came home, you would have understood exactly what a fine feast there was to be at the party. The tiny, thin brown shells that Merry-Heart had gone all the way to the seashore to buy were little crispy, crusty tarts, every one of them. The wee, white stones were dinner rolls made of fairy wheat, of which no mortal has ever tasted the sweetness. The buttercup petals were pats of fresh butter, and the pink clover tops were clusters of fairy goblets, each one brimming full of nectar. There were small green cheeses from the meadow and scarlet and blue berries from the woods. Merry-Heart had swept his house very clean, and then he had put an acorn cup filled with forget-me-not blossoms in the centre of his toadstool table. That was why you did not see him until almost your bedtime.

Then, when Merry-Heart was bobbing about among the flowers with his lantern, he

was lighting the way to his party. No one saw his guests, and they were different from any other guests at an elf's house-warming before, because they were not able to come in party clothes. They had no gifts to bring Merry-Heart, either, but he did not mind that.

There was a fairy with draggled, torn wings. Some people would have thought her a butterfly, almost ready to lay her eggs so that there might be other butterflies in the garden next summer. There was an old general who had lost a leg in battle, although almost anyone would have thought him a beetle who had been stepped on by mistake while he was guarding the lawn. There was a farmer who came in brown overalls, because he had no other clothes. If you saw him in the day time, you might think he was the cutworm who digs and digs in the kitchen garden, turning up fresh earth for the gardener. They were all like that, not stylish people, but good hearted, and just the right kind to make a house-warming merry.

And it was a merry party.

Every guest had a place to rest if he wanted to be quiet, or he could play or listen to the katy-did band that Merry-Heart had hired for the night. They had all that they could pos-

sibly eat, and a forget-me-not to wear, and they did not go home until the morning star shone down on them through the lilac bush.

After his guests had gone, Merry-Heart realized that it was time for breakfast. Then he realized that he was not one bit hungry. He thought he would clean his pantry, and when he went to the place among the roots that made his pantry, he found it was clean. Every single bit of the party feast was eaten.

"I hope the tarts were all filled with wild strawberry jam," Merry-Heart thought, "and there was enough butter for all the rolls, and that the clover nectar was sweet and the cheeses were not too strong, and the berries ripe."

Some people might wonder at these thoughts of Merry-Heart right after he had felt too full to eat any breakfast. He had really eaten nothing at his party; he had been too busy waiting on the others.

But you understand why Merry-Heart was not hungry the morning after his house-warming, don't you?

THE MUD PUDDLE ELF

ONCE upon a time there was a queer little elf who liked very much to play in mud puddles. He liked to splash around in them after every rain and make mud balls, and it made no difference at all to him how much he spattered his suit or dirtied his hands.

There were many other clean, useful things that this little elf might have done. He had been given a small hammer and chisel by his grandfather for cutting and shaping beautiful stones from the rocks. He had a small shovel for digging deep down in the earth and bringing up gold and silver. And he had two small, clever hands for keeping his house and garden neat. But he preferred to play in the mud and after a while all his neighbor elves gave him a nickname.

They called him the Mud Puddle Elf.

One night there was a soft, gentle rain that fell until morning. Then the sun came out and the little elf saw one of the largest mud puddles he had ever dreamed of in his front

yard. It was wide and black and soft and deep. He did not stop to wash his breakfast dishes, even, but went right outdoors to play in it.

He jumped up and down in the mud with no rubbers on. He dipped up the mud in his hands and made soft round balls of it. He threw his mud balls over his garden wall without stopping to think who might be passing by.

In the afternoon one of his neighbors leaned over the wall and spoke to the Mud Puddle Elf.

"Dear me, what a sight you are!" the neighbor said. "You are all covered with mud, and you won't look fit to see the fairy."

"Fairy? What fairy?" the Mud Puddle Elf asked. They had been a little village of elves for many years and in all that time they had never so much as set eyes on a fairy with gossamer wings and a wand tipped with a star and wearing a gauzy dress.

"Why, a butterfly courier just came to say that a fairy is on her way to the woods and would like to stop for tea at some house in our village," the neighbor elf explained. "But of course she would never think of having tea with you," he said, "a Mud Puddle Elf!"

"Oh, I don't know about that," the Mud Puddle Elf replied rather boastfully. You see there is no mirror in a pudlle of mud so he couldn't look at himself. "I have a very nice blue and white tea set left to me by my grandmother, and as soon as I finish this mud ball I will go in my house and wash the cups."

"You had better wash your face and your hands first," laughed the neighbor, and then he hurriedly dodged behind the wall, for the Mud Puddle Elf threw a soft, fat mud ball at him.

It did not hit him. It almost hit the fairy with gossamer wings and a wand tipped with a star and a gauzy dress as she tripped down the street. She had come a little sooner than she had been expected. But the Mud Puddle Elf did not know that, and he went in the house to wash his tea cups.

"Oh, dear, what a narrow escape!" sighed the fairy. "If that mud ball had exploded an inch closer it would have spoiled my wings and my dress. I must go in some house at once and ask for shelter." And, not knowing who lived there, the fairy went through the Mud Puddle Elf's gate. It was a very nice gate, made by the Elf's grandfather years before of carved oak branches. But as soon as

she was inside the fairy saw large muddy foot prints that went straight up to the front door. Then she saw that the door knob itself looked as if it were made of mud where the Mud Puddle Elf had taken it in his hand.

It frightened the fairy very much indeed. She turned and spread her wings and flew, for that was the quickest way of reaching the woods, and she did not stop in any elf's house to take tea.

The Mud Puddle Elf washed and washed his tea cups, but the dish water was so muddy from his hands that he couldn't seem to make them shine. He worked at them until long after tea time, and then he suddenly heard a commotion in his front yard. He went to the door and saw nearly all the elves in the village there, shaking their little fists at him, saying:

"You frightened away the fairy. She wouldn't visit any of us because of you. That's what comes of throwing mud." Then they went away and left the Mud Puddle Elf all alone.

So he sat down on his doorstep and thought about it. And he made up his mind that he would let his mud puddles dry up, for it wasn't good for himself or good for his village to have them.

THE MAGIC SCHOOL BOX

IT was twelve o'clock of the night before the first day of School and the Jack-in-the-Box jumped out of his box in the Toy Shop, looking all around with his sharp little eyes. It was the magic hour of twelve o'clock when no child may know what happens in the Toy Shop, because no one is there to see.

At the same time the cover of the School Box slid open, and the sharp Pen Knife with the pearl handle opened and sat up.

"Good evening," said the Jack, "And so here you are, ready for your great day tomorrow. I suppose the first thing that you will do will be to carve Jimmy's initials an a brand new school desk." The Jack liked to crack a joke now and then.

The Pen Knife snapped back his reply. "I was made to sharpen pencils," he said. "That was what I was made for, and that is what I shall do tomorrow." And he said it so snappishly that up jumped the Pencil with the red, white, and blue coat in great excitement.

"Well, just see who is here!" said Jack, "a Pencil, all dressed up and ready to draw pictures of the teacher tomorrow, the first day of school." It was hard for the Jack-in-the-Box to be serious.

The Pencil leaned toward the Pen Knife. "Sharpen me," said the Pencil, "so that I can show this insolent fellow how well I can write and set down sums." And Jack had to duck down in his box for a moment to avoid the shavings that the Pen Knife and the Pencil sent toward him.

In the midst of this, the cover of the Ink Pot popped off, and up hopped Jack again, for here was such a good chance for a joke!

"Ready to spill again!" he said. "Another member of the Blot Family is going to make trouble on the first day of school."

The Ink Pot put on its cover again tightly and looked even blacker than usual as it answered Jack.

"Ask the Copy Book about me," said the Ink Pot in a thick voice, "ask her if I am not able to stick to the Pen and make a good copy without blotting." And just then the Pen stood up straight, right there in the School Box and broke in on the conversation in a very sharp tone, "The Ink Pot and I are friends,"

said the Pen. "We have been friends for a great many years and I won't have him criticized. It all depends on me, of course, but he isn't going to show his relationship to the Blots tomorrow."

"Hear!" gurgled the Ink Pot.

In a far corner of the School Box lay the Red Eraser. The Jack peeped down at *him.* "Stand up and show yourself," he said. "You know how busy a day it is going to be for you tomorrow. *Rub, rub, rub,* that is what you will be doing from nine o'clock in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon. Stand up and let us see how important you look!"

But the Red Eraser did not move. He spoke to Jack in a weak voice as he stretched himself for another nap. "Let me alone," said the Red Eraser, "I am a soft, lazy rubber man and I am not going to do anything on the first day of school except sleep. No one will need me. There isn't going to be anything to rub out."

"Why do you tease them so?" the Circus Clown, who stood near by, asked the Jack-in-the-Box just then as the cover of the School Box slid shut again. "They know what they are about. They are going to make a record

for themselves tomorrow." The Clown could be serious if it suited him.

"Just for fun," said the Jack, "you ought to know that, always joking yourself."

"But we never had a chance to go to school, Jack," said the Clown a bit sadly.

THE TOY GOOSE

THERE was the greatest excitement in the kingdom. A Flea, a Grasshopper, and a Toy Goose had decided to see which of them could jump the highest, and they had asked the entire world, and anyone else who might care to come, to see the frolic. The king, even, heard of it and he wanted to help with the fun.

"Well," said the king, "I will give my daughter to the one who jumps the highest, for it would not be polite that these three distinguished ones should go to so much trouble for nothing."

The first one to step forward was the Flea. He had very fine manners, and bowed low on every side, for he had noble blood in his veins. And more than that he associated only with human beings, which made a great difference.

Then came the Grasshopper. He was certainly the larger, and he carried himself better, wearing the smart green uniform in which he was born. Moreover, as he said, he be-

longed to a very old family in Egypt and was also well thought of here at home.

The fact was, when he was brought in out of the fields, he was put in a house three stories high, all made of court-cards with the colored sides turned in. Both doors and windows were cut out in the waist of the Queen of Hearts.

"I sing so well," the Grasshopper said, "that sixteen native Crickets, who had chirped ever since they were born and still had no house of cards to live in, grew thinner than they ever were before out of vexation when they heard me."

So the Flea and the Grasshopper were able to give very good accounts of themselves, and saw no reason why they should not have the princess. The Toy Goose said nothing, and people decided that this was because he knew so much. The House-Dog sniffed at him, and assured all that the Toy Goose came of a good family. The old Councilor, who had been given three decorations for holding his tongue, said that the Toy Goose knew more than the man who wrote the almanacs, for one could see by the feathers on his back if it would or would not be a severe winter. This was more

than one could see on the back of the almanac man.

"Well, I shall say nothing," said the king, "although I have an opinion."

The jumping contest was to take place at once, so the Flea leaped up first. He jumped so high that nobody could see where he went, so they all said that he had not gone up at all. This was too bad.

The Grasshopper jumped only half as high, but right into the king's face by mistake, which the king said was most unpleasant.

The Toy Goose stood still a long time thinking to himself, until at last the people thought that he was not going to go up at all.

"I only hope that he is not ill," said the House-Dog, when, *pop,* the Toy Goose made a side jump, and came down right in the lap of the princess, who was sitting on a little gold stool close by.

Then the king said, "There is nothing above my daughter. Therefore the Toy Goose has made the highest jump that there is. To do this one must have a good mind and the Toy Goose has shown that he had one. He has a mind of his own!"

And so the Toy Goose won the princess, or

it might be said that the princess was given the Toy Goose.

"It is all the same to me," said the Flea. "She may have the old Toy Goose for all I care. I jumped the highest, but in this world a fine appearance is what people seem to look at the most." Then the Flea went into foreign lands and enlisted in the army.

The Grasshopper sat on a green bank and thought about wordly things, and said, "Yes, a fine appearance is everything. It is what people like." And then he began chirping his melancholy song from which I have taken this story, and which may, or may not, be true, even if it is printed.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PIE COUNTRY

THEY called it the Pie Country, because pie was the favorite article of diet among young and old. Pie-making was the main business of the Pie Country; you could smell them baking for miles around; apple, peach, beef-steak, lemon, and orange, pumpkin, and all the nicest flavors of little tarts—that is, if you were so lucky as to find the Country at all. And the children wore their hair crinkled around the edges, the pie-crust-cut the barbers called it. Suits and dresses were made of a strange, crisp brown stuff woven to look like pastry crust. And the highest office in the whole land was that of High Chief Pastry Cook. His rank was above that even of the King.

It came to pass in one of the castles of the Pie Country that the little Princess had a birthday, and, to make her happy, a little Prince was invited to take dinner with her from a nearby castle. There never before, it seemed, had been such a wonderful birthday

party dinner. In the middle of the table stood a great tower made of puff paste, about which were little birds baked from the lightest kind of crust. Ribbons of pie crust stretched from this to the guests' places. The Princess was dressed in a white party dress resembling meringue, and in front of her stood a thick, rich lemon meringue pie, her favorite flavor.

According to the custom of the country, the Princess cut the pie in half, and a page, who stood behind her chair, took one half to the little Prince, who was the guest of honor dressed in his crusty best. According to the custom of the Pie Country, the Prince should have at once eaten his half of the lemon meringue pie with gusto, but he didn't.

Now instead of eating his pie, the little Prince made up a face and pushed his plate away from him.

"Oh, dear, what can be the matter?" asked the Princess.

"I can't eat lemon meringue pie," explained the little Prince. "My favorite flavor is orange."

Well, that trouble was easily remedied. The Princess sent out orders, and in came a page with a large, rich, hot orange pie which he placed in front of the little Prince. Then,

according to the custom of the Pie Country, he cut it into thirds, one third for the little Princess, one third for his majesty, and one third for the butcher's boy, who was next to him at the party table. The butcher held high rank, because he filled so many pies.

But instead of eating his third of the orange pie, the butcher's boy looked very much put out and pushed his plate ever so far away from him.

"Oh, *dear,*" cried the little Princess, who was very kind hearted and wished everyone to have a good time. "*Is* there anything the matter with your pie?"

"Nothing," said the butcher's boy loftily, "except that it is not my kind of pie. I eat only a beef pie."

Well, that difficulty was quickly overcome. The Princess sent another order and in came two pages bearing a large, crusty beef pie which they placed in front of the butcher's boy. Then he cut the beef pie into quarters, one-quarter for the little Princess, one-quarter for the little Prince, one-quarter for the apple woman's child who sat next him, and one-quarter for himself. The apple woman held a very high office on account of raising so many pie apples.

But instead of eating her quarter of the beef pie, the apple woman's child began to cry.

"O, dear, *dear,*" sighed the Princess, ready to cry herself, "what is the matter now?"

"I eat nothing but apple pie," sobbed the apple woman's child.

Of course anyone should have known that. The Princess ordered a deep dish green apple pie, with cheese, brought in, and it was set in front of the apple woman's child. And the apple woman's child cut it, according to the custom of the country, into five pieces, one piece for the little Princess, one piece for the little Prince, one piece for the butcher's boy, one piece for the boy whose father had invented cranberry tarts, and one piece for herself.

Everything seemed all right then, for the cranberry tart boy loved cheese, but, instead, everything was all wrong. The guests just sat and looked in front of them and did not so much as touch their forks. No wonder. In front of each guest at the Princess' birthday dinner stood one-half of a lemon pie, one-third of an orange pie, one-quarter of a beef pie, and one-fifth of a deep dish green apple pie. It

was confusing. No one knew which to eat first. It was discouraging. No one wanted to eat so much pie at one time.

There is no knowing what might have happened then; the party might have been spoiled, or the Pie Country been taken off the map—anything as unhappy might have come to pass had not the Princess had a wonderful idea.

She excused herself from the table, consulted with the High Chief Pastry Cook out in the kitchen, called in Simple Simon, the court jester, to amuse the guests, and had all those pieces of pie taken off the table. Then, after only a little while, a strange thing happened.

The fiddlers struck up, the kitchen door opened, and in came the High Chief Pastry Cook bearing a great, steaming, crispy pie high above his head. Bowing low, he set it before the little Princess, who cut it. As soon as the odor of the new pie reached them the guests began to sniff with delight. It smelled of lemon and orange and beef and apples. In addition, it smelled of all the other savory goodies of the Pie Country, spice, and sugar, and raisins, and currants and citron.

The new pie tasted of lemon, orange, beef, apples, spice, sugar, raisins, currants and cit-

ron. No one could speak until they had finished the pie, to the last crumb of its rich, flaky crust.

Then, "What pie is it?" they asked with one voice.

"Just a mixture of all your favorite pies," the Princess said sweetly.

"Made Instant Needed. Curious! Enchanting!" boasted the High Chief Pastry Cook proudly.

"MINCE pie," added the Princess, putting the first letters together.

And that was the first mince pie, in the Pie Country, or anywhere else for that matter.

THE PRINCESS WHO WAS CURIOUS

"HOW shall we ever persuade the Princess Marigold to do her plain sewing?" sighed the Lady in Waiting.

"A princess should know how to sew," said her mother, the Queen. "She will never grow up to be a good queen if she is not industrious."

"Where is the Princess Marigold?" asked the Court Wise Woman.

"I am afraid that her Royal Highness is in her Mother's bedchamber, looking in the chests," said the Princess Marigold's nurse. "She went there from the castle larder where she had been opening the jam pots that the cook supposed were out of her reach."

"Ah, me!" sighed the Queen.

And "Ah, me!" sighed the Lady in Waiting.

The Princess Marigold's nurse sighed over the curious ways of the Princess almost every time that she breathed, so she was not able to sigh any harder.

But the Court Wise Woman suddenly had one of her very wisest thoughts and it made her eyes more twinkling and her smile wrinkles deeper. "Leave the matter of the Princess Marigold's plain sewing to me," she said, "and we shall see what we shall see."

The next morning the Princess Marigold awoke with the larks, for she had decided just what she was going to do. The day before she had poked into the jam pots and sampled plum and strawberry and orange and raspberry jam. She had also tried on her mother's, the Queen's, best lace collars and ribbons and put them back in sad disorder in the chests. Today the Princess Marigold had decided that she was going to climb way, way up to the tower where the Court Wise Woman had her rooms and see if a little, little key that she had found at bed time would fit the Court Wise Woman's desk. She hoped that it would, because she was most anxious to see what was inside.

But when the Princess Marigold came back to her own little pink and gold room after breakfast to get the key that she had hidden there, she was very much surprised.

In the corner of the room, where it had certainly not been before, stood a nice little cupboard, gilded, and carved in a pattern of birds

and butterflies. It stood on four little carved feet and it was just as tall as the Princess Marigold was. There was a glass door in front and through it the Princess could see a little blue enameled chest that might hold a new doll, or a bracelet, or something as charming.

"For a Princess Who is Not Curious." That was what a card which hung from the top of the cupboard said.

Do you suppose the Princess Marigold stopped at that? Not a bit of it, for she had very, very curious ways. Looking to see that no one was watching, she tried her little key in the lock of the corner of the cupboard. Oh, it fitted! So the Princess opened the door and took out the little blue enamelled chest.

This, also, was locked, but the key fitted it as well and she was able to open it. Inside the chest was a small box, and inside the box was a little silk bag. Inside the silk bag was a beautiful square of sheer, white linen just the right size for a pocket handkerchief. It was basted for hemming and there was a shining needle, threaded, and ready to start the hem stitching in it. There was a bright little silver thimble, too, and a pincushion in the shape of

a strawberry, and a pair of tiny scissors in the bag.

"Oh, oh!" said the Princess Marigold happily. "This is just what I have been longing for!" And then she sat down by the window and began to sew, more neatly and faster than anyone had ever been able to persuade her to sew before. She sewed so steadily that the sun was almost at high noon and the hemming was nearly finished before she looked up. When she did, it was because there was a rustling at the door.

There stood the Queen and the Lady in Waiting and the Princess' nurse and the Court Wise Woman. They were all looking at the open corner cupboard, and they were all laughing!

The Princess Marigold looked at it too, and then she looked at the sewing she had done, and which no one before had ever been able to persuade her to do. And the Princess Marigold laughed, too, for she saw that they had used her very curious ways to teach her industrious ways. But she was also a tiny bit ashamed. So she decided that she wouldn't be curious any more, but industrious, as is fitting for any princess who wants to grow up into a queen.

THE RUNAWAY PRINCE

LITTLE Prince John opened the gate to the garden, went out into the street, and then looked cautiously around and back. He was safe; not one of all the palace guards had seen him. His pockets were full of gold pennies, everyone stamped with the bright crown of his family. He was going to run away and have a good time, in his own way, and all by himself, for the rest of the day.

He had made his plans quite early in the morning when the family had said that he might go out and play in the palace grounds alone, so he knew in just which direction to go. Prince John ran as fast as his eight year old legs would carry him to the shop of Master Sugar-and-Spice, the pastry cook. He bought frosted buns and currant buns, cherry tarts and plum cake, all of which he ate without a napkin and right there in Master Sugar-and-Spice's door. Then Prince John started on again.

From here he went down to the street where

the Swineherds had their huts. There was ever so much soft, black earth here, and Prince John spent an hour making mud pies. Then he was up and away again.

On and on he went, through the dust and through the briers, feeling at last rather cross and uncomfortable, for he had never done these things before. He met some rough boys who were on their way to gather apples in an orchard that did not belong to them. But the farmer had been there first, and the trees were bare. Prince John tore his stockings and bumped his legs climbing over the orchard wall, but the boys went on their way, shouting, and left him there. He was too much bumped, and too tired to go any farther.

And just after Prince John ran away from the palace a messenger arrived there with a very precious package. In it was a crown. It was a very beautiful crown, just the right size to fit a boy's head, and sent by Prince John's grandfather, because he thought that the boy was old enough to begin wearing it. The crown had been in the family a long time, and it was made of gold. Shining in it, were some precious stones, a diamond, white and pure, a blue sapphire that shone for the truth of the family, and a glowing ruby that shone

for their fine, brave blood and family pride.

"Come in, Prince John, and try on your new crown," the court cried, and then it was discovered that the Prince had run away.

At once a search for the runaway was started. The Court Wise Man went in one direction, asking of whoever he met, "Has Prince John passed by this way?" But the answer was, "No, only one of the pastry cook's apprentice boys has passed by, his mouth as far as his ears all daubed with jam."

The Court Chancellor went in another direction, asking of whoever he met, "Has Prince John passed this way?" But the answer was, "No, only one of the swineherd boys has passed by, his hands all black with mud."

The Court Treasurer went in a third direction, asking of whoever he met, "Has Prince John passed by this way?" But the answer was, "No, only a crowd of rough boys who take apples from the orchards of the farmers."

None of these could be Prince John of the family of the gold crown, with its diamond, its sapphire, and its ruby. So the court went home, and there was great despair.

At last the Queen put on her walking boots and her oldest gown and started out to look for the Prince. And because she was his mother

and loved him beyond words, she went on and on, farther than Master Sugar-and-Spice's shop, farther than the street of the Swineherds, and farther than the place where the boys started out for apples. At last she came to the dirty, tired, bumped little Prince John there by the orchard wall, and she kissed him and took him home.

But when they reached the palace, no one would believe that he was the Prince.

"Look at his face, and his hands, and his stockings!" they cried. "No member of his grandfather's family would do the things that he has been doing."

But the Queen only smiled, for she was his mother and loved him with all her heart. "Only wait until I wash him and mend him," she said.

"And only wait until I show you how well I can behave!" Prince John said. So it happened that he was able to wear the family crown after all.

THE PRINCESS WHO SAW HERSELF

ONCE upon a time, in the days when there were many kings and queens and princes and princesses, there was one little Princess who was expecting a visit from her fairy godmother. It was going to be a great occasion, for her fairy godmother had not had time to pass through the kingdom since the princess was five years old, and now she was eight. The Queen said that she was quite likely to bring as pretty a gift as a wishing ring or a pair of silver slippers for the Princess.

"She is very fond of you, my dear," the Queen said, "and she sent a letter to say that she is most anxious to know how you look now."

"Oh, I shall look very well indeed for my fairy godmother's visit," the Princess said. "I will dress up and look at myself in all the mirrors the day on which she comes."

With that the Princess went right on with the things she usually did, and dreamed about

a gold wishing ring and a pair of silver slippers.

One thing that the Princess often did was to make pictures with ink at her father's desk. The King objected to having her do this, so the Princess had to hurry and she left a huge blot of black ink on a sheet of clean white blotting paper. Another thing that the Princess liked to do was to tease her white Persian cat, and the cat had grown quite cross and scratchy because of it. He very seldom purred. Still another thing that the Princess liked to do was to play all day long without washing her hands, unless some one of the ladies in waiting actually insisted that she be tidy. Indeed she was often so dirty that her hands left prints on white doors.

The Princess did all these different things on the day before the one when her fairy godmother was expected, and she did one thing more. She climbed up on the castle wall in one of her best dresses and tore it. A large piece of the cloth was left in the thorns of the red rose bush that grew there.

But on the morning of the great day the ladies in waiting helped the Princess to dress in her white frock with the blue sash and her

blue silk socks and white shoes and blue hair bow. Her hands were neat and tidy and her hair was most beautifully curled. She looked at herself in her own mirror and in her mother's mirror, and then she went down to the castle drawing room to look at herself in a long mirror there that reflected her from head to foot. Her fairy godmother had already arrived, and the Princess intended to be the first one to see her.

But the fairy godmother was making a tour of inspection of the castle. She had been the fairy godmother of the Princess' mother, the Queen, also, and she liked to inspect the beautiful housekeeping of the castle. In her scarlet short-gown and mob cap and big spectacles, the fairy godmother went all over the castle, poking her cane into every corner. When she was through and reached the reception room, the entire court was assembled for the presentation of the Princess, from the King down to the smallest page.

In through the door hobbled the fairy godmother, and she went straight up to the princess and looked sharply at her through her spectacles. Then she turned away.

"Where is the Princess?" she demanded.

"This is the Princess," the Court Chamberlain said, pointing to the little girl in white with blue bows.

"Oh, no, you can't make me believe that," the fairy godmother said, "she doesn't look a bit like the Princess. I've found out how the Princess looks."

"How, then, does the Princess look?" the Court Chamberlain asked, for every one was quite puzzled by this time.

"She wears a torn dress," explained the fairy godmother, "I saw a piece of it as I rode over the garden wall. She looks as cross as a Persian cat does when his tail is pulled. She has dirty hands; I saw their prints on the white doors. And I saw her picture in a big black blot on a clean white blotter. You can't deceive me about the Princess. She isn't here." And the fairy godmother summoned the broomstick on which she rode and started home on it.

How the court did laugh. The Princess smiled a little too, thinking of the joke. You see, she had always had the idea that a mirror was her only looking glass, and now she understood that she was reflected in many other places.

"I must be sure that my fairy godmother

knows me the next time she comes," the Princess decided, and she did. What was more, the gold wishing ring and the silver slippers seemed just twice as pretty on her next birthday, because the Princess had earned them instead of only dreaming about them.

THE SWINEHERD

THERE was once a poor Prince, who had a kingdom which was quite small but still was large enough so that he could marry upon it, and that was what he wanted to do.

Now it was certainly somewhat bold of him to say to the Emperor's daughter, "Will you have me?" But he did venture it, for his name was famous far and wide; there were hundreds of princesses who would have been glad to say yes. But did she say so? Well, we shall see.

On the grave of the Prince's father there grew a rose bush, a very beautiful rose bush. It bloomed only every fifth year, and even then it bore only a single rose, but what a rose that was! It was so sweet that whoever smelled of it forgot all sorrow and care. And the Prince had a nightingale, too, which could sing as if all possible melodies were collected in its little throat. This rose and this nightingale the princess was to have, and therefore they were put into great silver cases and sent to her.

The Emperor caused the presents to be carried before him into the great hall where the Princess was playing at visiting with her ladies in waiting—they did nothing else—and when she saw the great silver cases with the presents in them, she clapped her hands with joy.

"If it is only a pussy-cat!" she cried.

But then out came the splendid rose.

"Oh, how pretty it is!" said all the court ladies.

"It is more than pretty," said the Emperor. "It is charming."

But the Princess felt of it, and then she almost cried.

"Fie, Papa," she said, "it is not an *artificial* rose. It is a natural one."

"Fie," said all the court ladies. "It is only a natural rose."

"Let us see what is in the second case before we decide to be angry," said the Emperor. And then the nightingale came out. It sang so beautifully that they did not at once know what to say against it.

"*Superbe! Charmant!*" said the maids of honor, for they all spoke French, each one worse than the other.

"How that bird reminds me of the late Em-

press' musical snuff box," said an old cavalier. "Yes, it is the same tone, the same expression."

"Yes," said the Emperor, and he began to cry.

"I really hope that it is not a natural bird," said the Princess.

"Yes, it is a natural bird," said they who had brought it in.

"Then let the bird fly away," said the Princess, and she would by no means allow the Prince to so much as see her.

But the Prince was not at all dismayed. He stained his face brown and black, drew his hat down over his brows, and knocked at the door.

"Good day, Emperor," said the Prince. Could I not be employed here in the castle?"

"Well," replied the Emperor, "but there are so many who want places. Still, let me see; I want someone who can keep the pigs, for we have so many here."

So the Prince got the appointment to be the Emperor's swineherd. He received a miserable room, small, and near the pig-sty, and here he was obliged to stay. But all day long he worked, and when it was evening, he had finished a neat little pot with bells all around

it, and when the pot boiled these bells rang out prettily, and played the old melody:

"Oh, my darling Augustine,
All is lost, all is lost."

But the cleverest thing about the whole arrangement was that, by holding one's finger in the steam from the pot, one could at once smell whatever food was being cooked at every hearth in the town.

Now the Princess came with all her maids of honor, and when she heard the melody she stood quite still and seemed very much pleased. She, too, could play, "Oh, my darling Augustine." It was the only piece she could play, and only with one finger.

"Why, that is what I play," said the Princess. "He must be an educated swineherd! Hark-ye, go down and ask him the price of the instrument."

So one of the maids of honor had to go down, but first she put on a pair of pattens.

"What do you want for the pot?" she inquired.

"I want ten kisses from the Princess," said the Swineherd.

"Dearie me; listen to him!" said the maid of honor.

"Well, what did he say?" asked the Princess.

"I really can't repeat it, it is so shocking," said the lady.

"Well, then whisper it in my ear," said the Princess. And the lady did so.

"He is very rude," declared the Princess, and she went away. But when she had gone only a little way, the bells sounded so prettily:

"Oh, my darling Augustine,
All is lost, lost."

"Hark-ye," said the Princess, "ask him if he will take ten kisses from my maids of honor?"

"No, thanks," said the swineherd, "ten kisses from the Princess, or I keep my pot."

"How tiresome that is!" said the Princess. "But, at least, you must all stand around me so that no one will see."

So the maids of honor stood around her and spread out their dresses, and the swineherd received ten kisses, and the Princess the pot.

Then there was rejoicing! All the day and all the evening the pot was kept boiling. There was not a kitchen hearth in the whole town of which they did not know its dinner,

at the cobbler's as well as at the court chamberlain's. The ladies danced with pleasure, and clapped their hands.

"We know who will have sweet soup and pancakes for dinner, and who has hasty pudding and cutlets," they said. "What could be more interesting?"

"Yes, but do not tell anyone," said the Princess, "for I am the Emperor's daughter."

"Yes, we understand," all the ladies replied.

The swineherd, that is, the Prince, let no day pass by without doing something, and so he made a rattle next. When any person swung this rattle, he could play all the waltzes, hops, polkas, and other dances that had been known since the creation of the world.

"Now that is superb!" said the Princess as she went past. "I have never heard a finer composition. Hark-ye! Go down and ask him what the instrument costs. But mind, I give no more kisses."

"He demands a hundred kisses from the Princess," said the maid of honor who had gone down to make the inquiry.

"I think he must be mad!" exclaimed the Princess, and she went away. But when she had gone a little distance she stood still. "One must encourage art," she observed. "I

am the Emperor's daughter. Tell him he shall have his ten kisses as he did the last time, and the rest he shall receive from my maids of honor."

"Ah, but we don't like to do it," said the ladies.

"That is all nonsense on your part," retorted the Princess. "And if I can allow myself to be kissed, you can too. Remember, I give you your board and wages beside."

And so the maids of honor had to go down to the swineherd again, with this message.

"A hundred kisses from the Princess," said he, "nothing else will pay for my rattle."

"Stand round me then," said the Princess, and all the maids of honor made a circle around as she kissed the swineherd.

"What is that crowd down by the pig-sty?" asked the Emperor, who had stepped out on the balcony. He rubbed his eyes, and then he put on his spectacles. Gracious mercy, how surprised he was! And he was angry too. "Why, those are the maids of honor!" said the Emperor, "I shall have to go down to them."

He pulled up his slippers behind, for they were shoes that he had trodden down at the heel, and then how he did hurry! So soon as he came down to the courtyard, he went quite

softly, and the maids of honor were too busy counting the kisses, and seeing fair play, to notice the Emperor. Then he stood on tiptoe.

"What's that!" said he, when he saw that there was kissing going on. And he began hitting them on their heads with his slipper as the swineherd was taking the eighty-sixth kiss.

"Be off!" said the Emperor, now very angry.

And the Princess and the swineherd were both expelled from the kingdom. So there she stood and cried, the rain streamed down, and the swineherd scolded.

"Oh, miserable wretch that I am!" said the Princess, "if I had only taken the handsome Prince! Oh, how unhappy I am!"

Then the swineherd went behind a tree, washed the stains from his face, threw away the shabby clothes, and stepped forth in his princely attire, so handsome that the Princess was fain to bow before him.

"I have come to this, that I despise you," said he, not returning her bow. "You would not have an honest Prince. You did not value the rose and the nightingale. But for a plaything you kissed the swineherd, so here is your reward."

And then he went into his kingdom, and shut the door in her face, and put up the bar.

THE BIRD THAT MADE THE PRINCESS LAUGH

IT was a little wooden bird carved cunningly and well on the back of a sled. It had a wooden tail and a wooden bill, wooden wings and wooden legs, but it was a clever little bird. And its cleverness makes this story, together with other things such as geese and a king, a princess, and Once Upon a Time.

There was a princess who lived in a country of which no one remembers the name, and she was a most sorrowful princess. All day and sometimes all night she sat and wept, and she never by any chance smiled. No jokes could make her laugh, and her court ladies were kept busy embroidering handkerchiefs to hold the princess' tears. It was a most serious matter.

So the king of that country issued a decree that anyone who was able to make the sorrowful princess laugh should have a half of the kingdom in trust and the hand of the princess so soon as she grew up. But whoever failed in the attempt should be rolled in tar and all

stuck up with feathers afterward, a sorry sight indeed. And it is said that the king came to repent his decree, for he used up all the tar in the kingdom, and had to send abroad for feathers. No one could make the princess smile, and almost any one whom you met on the street had a feather or two still showing underneath his coat.

In the same country there lived three brothers, Peter, and Paul and Humdrum, the first two smart young fellows, but Humdrum a simple lad, and considered of no account at home. And Peter decided that he would try his luck at making the sorrowful princess smile. He knew some funny songs, and he lived so far out in the country that he had an idea it would be an easy matter to make the princess laugh.

So Peter's mother gave him a bag of bread and meat, and his father gave him some money, and Peter set out.

But Peter had not gone so very far on his way when he met an old woman walking through the woods and dragging a small sledge behind her. She seemed tired and weak, and she spoke to Peter:

"Will you give me a bite of bread and a penny?" the old woman asked Peter.

"That I will not," said Peter. "I have no more than I can spare, for I am on my way to win half of the kingdom and the princess' hand to boot by making her laugh." And Peter went carelessly on his way, whistling.

But when Peter reached the royal city and was ushered into the palace and the presence of the king and the princess, his funny songs were of no avail. They only made the princess call for a dozen more handkerchiefs to quench her tears. And Peter was dipped in tar, rolled in feathers, and sent home in such a state that his mother used a whole keg of butter in cleaning him.

Peter's sad experience should have frightened Paul, but it did not. "Your songs were not funny enough," Paul said to his brother. "The thing to do is to tell the princess funny stories the way I can."

So Paul's mother gave him a bag of bread and meat, and his father gave him some money, and Paul set out.

And Paul had not gone very far on his way when he met an old woman walking through the woods and dragging a small sledge behind her. She spoke to Paul as she had to Peter;

"Will you give me a bite of bread and a penny?" the old woman asked Paul.

"Indeed no!" said Paul. "I need all my provisions and all my money, for I am on my way to win half of the kingdom and the hand of the princess when I make her laugh." And Paul went on carelessly, not looking back.

But when Paul was taken into the presence of the king and the court, the princess was not able to see the joke of one of his stories. She only cried over them, and called for two dozen fresh handkerchiefs as Paul was taken out and dipped in tar and rolled in feathers.

It would seem as if the troubles of his brothers would have discouraged Humdrum, but he startled his family one morning not long after that by saying that he was going to try his luck with the princess.

"Luck!" exclaimed his mother, "when you have never shown any cleverness at home. You are nothing but a simpleton, and I can't spare any provisions for you other than one small loaf."

"And I can give you nothing but a penny," said Humdrum's father.

So Humdrum set out with nothing but one small loaf and a penny, and no idea in his head as to how he was going to make the princess laugh.

He had not gone very far when whom should he meet but the same old woman drawing the same small sled behind her through the woods. And the old woman spoke to Humdrum, just as she had to Peter and Paul:

"Give me a bite of bread and a penny," she said.

Humdrum gave her all of the loaf that was left at once, and his only penny. "To laugh is enough," he thought to himself, chuckling at the idea of having given away everything he owned.

The old woman ate, and she pocketed the penny. "Where are you going?" she asked then.

"To the palace to make the princess laugh," said Humdrum.

"How will you do it?" she asked.

Humdrum told her that he had not so much as an idea.

"Perhaps I can help you," the old woman said. "You may have my sled. Do you see the little wooden bird carved on the back? When you seat yourself on the sled, do you say: 'Pip, little bird!' and the sled will drive along until you tell it to stop. When any one touches the sled, the little bird will say, 'Pip!' Then if you call out loudly, 'Hold on!' there

they will have to stay until you say to them, 'Let go!' "

Humdrum thanked the old woman for her gift, hopped into the sled, said, "Pip, little bird!" and off they went along the road as swiftly as if the sled were drawn by a pair of prancing horses. Many of those who saw it were so astonished that they were never able to close their mouths afterward, and others dropped off their noses, but little did Humdrum care. He rode on merrily until night and then he stopped at an inn to rest.

The guests at the inn saw him arrive, and they were very curious. Humdrum had tied the sled to his bed to keep it safe, but one of the maid-servants crept in to look at it. As soon as she touched the sled, "Pip!" went the little wooden bird, and "Hold on!" said Humdrum. The girl was stuck fast then to the sled, quite unable to move.

Soon another girl crept into the room and took hold of the sled in the dark. "Pip!" said the bird. "Hold on!" said Humdrum, and there she was, stuck fast also. And before morning all the maid-servants in the inn had met with the same fate.

It was a good joke. Early the next morning, before anyone was up, Humdrum took his

sled out into the courtyard of the inn, hopped in, said, "Pip, little bird!" and off they went with a string of girls hanging to the back. They ran as fast as they could and it was a funny sight, so odd that it attracted the attention of a priest and a grave digger standing outside of a church on the way. These two men thought that the procession should be stopped. The priest ran after Humdrum, catching hold of the apron strings of the last girl. "Pip!" said the bird, and "Hold on!" said Humdrum, and the priest could not let go.

The grave digger followed the priest, catching hold of his flying robe. "Pip!" said the bird, and "Hold on!" said Humdrum, and so the grave digger ran along behind.

Presently they came to a blacksmith-shop, and the smith was standing beside the road. In one hand he had his tongs, and in the other a bundle of hay. He was a merry fellow and he laughed heartily when he saw the strange procession, reaching out with his tongs for the grave-digger's coat tail. "Pip!" said the little wooden bird, and "Hold on!" said Humdrum. So there was a blacksmith added to those who ran behind the sled.

Just then some geese came walking slowly along as geese do, all in a row. They saw the

hay in the blacksmith's hand, and the leader rushed after it. So did all the other geese, and as the little bird called, "Pip!" for each goose, and Humdrum said, "Hold on!" there was a long line of waddling, cackling geese at the tail of the procession.

It seemed to Humdrum that he hardly looked fitting with this retinue to appear at the palace, but before he had time to turn about, there he was in front of it, and the king himself happened to be out on the balcony sunning himself. And when the king saw Humdrum riding in the small sled with the little wooden bird sitting up as smart as you please on the back, and the girls, and the priest, and the grave-digger, and the blacksmith, and the line of geese on behind, how he did laugh!

The king laughed so hard, and burst off so many of his buttons that the court came running to see what was the matter, and out came the princess. She looked at the sled, and Humdrum, and the little wooden bird, and the others, and then she began to make an odd noise.

"Bring about three dozen handkerchiefs!" said the court. "The princess is—" And then they stopped, for a strange thing had happened. "Laughing!" they said. Yes, the

princess was laughing until she was crying, and she was always able to laugh after that.

"Stop!" cried Humdrum, and the sled stopped. "Let go!" he said, and the procession disappeared, the geese cackling all the way.

So Humdrum was not rolled in tar and dipped in feathers, but he was given half of the kingdom and the hand of the princess when she grew up.

THE SQUIRREL FAMILY

IT came swiftly along, in and out among the trees of the wood without difficulty, so small it was. The two tiny piebald ponies that drew it shook their wavy manes as they danced along, the little bells on their harness ringing softly. But the queerest part of it for the children, Rollo and his sister Maia, who were spending the afternoon in the forest, was that when the tiny carriage drew near they could see that a fairy godmother was driving it.

"Jump in," she said, nodding off-handedly.

"But how—?" began Maia. "How can Rollo and I possibly get into that carriage?" But almost before she had finished she and Rollo seemed to somehow melt a little, she found herself climbing into the back of the phaeton with Rollo beside her, the godmother's whip went, crack, and off they set.

They went fast, oh, so fast! In and out among the great looming pine trees their strange coachman made her way, without once wavering, so that the children felt no fear of

striking against the massive trunks, although the Christmas trees had never seemed so enormous.

"Godmother, godmother, don't drive too far!" Rollo called at last, but as he and Maia turned around, they found that they were suddenly standing on the moss. Godmother was no longer there. She and the carriage and the ponies had completely disappeared.

It was dark in the woods, but a few steps brought them to a clearing. The moss was particularly beautiful, so bright and green that Maia stooped down to feel it.

"I suppose no one ever comes this way," she said.

"Nobody but a fairy godmother and the squirrels," Rollo answered, touching the trunk of a great oak tree close at hand. Suddenly there came a quick pattering sound, like the rush of many little feet inside the trunk. Then, with a kind of squeak, as if the hinges were somewhat rusty, a door, so cleverly made in the bark that no one would know that it was there, slowly opened from the inside, showing a dark hollow about large enough for one of the children to creep through on hands and knees.

"Which of us shall go first?" Rollo asked,

lifting his red cap as he looked at Maia.

"I think that you had better," Maia said timidly, so Rollo, not wanting to seem backward, started, and Maia was soon comforted by hearing him call back, "How beautiful!"

So Maia plunged bravely into the dark hole which led her to a short flight of steps which she easily climbed, and then a soft light broke on her eyes.

They stood at the entrance to a short passage quite wide enough for two to walk along it abreast. It was entirely lined and carpeted with moss and the light came from the roof, though how one could not tell, for it, too, was covered with another kind of creeping plant growing too thickly for one to see through. The moss was deliciously soft and springy to walk on.

"Isn't this a nice place?" Rollo said. "We might run races here all the afternoon!"

But Maia called out to him, "Oh, Rollo, look at this!"

It was a round room, moss lined like the passage, with a wide, round hole in the roof into which the children suddenly descended. As they waited, a basket descended like an elevator from the roof. It was fitted with moss cushions and big enough to hold them both.

In they got, and immediately the basket rose again and stopped at what in a proper house would be called the next floor. But even before the basket elevator stopped, a number of brown heads were to be seen eagerly watching for it, and many little paws were extended to help the visitors out.

"Good day, good day," squeaked a multitude of shrill voices; "Welcome to Squirrel Land! We have been watching for you ever since the fairy godmother sent her pigeon to tell us that you were coming. And the supper is all ready, the acorn cakes smelling so good and the chestnut pasties done to a turn." As he made this speech, the fattest and fussiest of the squirrels made a duck with its head and a flourish with its tail, which were meant for the most graceful of curtsies.

"Thank you, Mr. Bushy," Maia started to say, but a squirrel who wore a large apron, stepped up close to the little girl. "Alas, my dear husband is ill with the gout today," Mrs. Bushy said. "He ate too many pasties yesterday. If he had one, he had ten," she said, wiping the tears from her eyes with the corner of her apron," and he is resting in the supper room. But you shall see him presently. And here are our children. Stand forward, my

dears, you have nothing to be ashamed of. Do look at their tails; did you ever see such tails!" And Mrs. Bushy's eyes sparkled with pride. "Here they are, all nine of them; Nibble, Scramble, Bunchy, Friskit, and Whiff, my dear boys; and Clamberina, Fluffy, Tossie, and sweet little Curletta, my handsome daughters."

At this each of the nine little Bushy children, who had collected in a row, made the same duck with the head and flourish with the tail that their mother had.

"Such manners! Such sweet manners!" said Mrs. Bushy in an aside to Maia.

Maia was by this time nearly choking with laughter, but she managed to keep it in as Mrs. Bushy went on speaking. "And shall we go in to supper now?" she asked, "I am sure that you must be hungry."

"Yes, I think we are," Rollo said, "and I know how good your chestnut cakes must be!"

"This isn't the season for chestnuts," Maia said; "aren't yours rather old and stale?"

Mrs. Bushy looked at Maia patronizingly. "Ah, to be sure," she said, "you do not know anything about our magic preserving closets with all the latest improvements. Now lead the way, my dears," she told the young squir-

rels at which the nine set off with a rush, jumping and scampering along.

Maia and Rollo followed into the supper room where, at the end of a long, narrow table covered with all sorts of queer dishes decorated with fern leaves, Father Bushy, in a moss arm chair, his tail comfortably waving over his head like an umbrella, sat.

"I beg your pardon, my dear young friends," he began in a rather deeper, but quite as squeaky voice as the rest of his family, "for receiving you like this. Mrs. Bushy will have made my apologies. This unfortunate attack of the gout! I am afraid that I eat too much. Do take your places at the table."

So everybody sat down, but the dishes in front of Maia and Rollo were filled with such strange looking food that they hardly knew how to be polite about beginning to eat.

"Could I have an apple, please?" Maia asked at last, catching sight of something of which she knew the name. And when Mrs. Bushy pressed her to try a chestnut cake, she did not like to refuse but took it, holding it in both hands on the way to her mouth as she saw the Bushy family doing. This gave the

squirrels a very good idea of the way the company had been brought up. The chestnut cakes were really nice, but poor Rollo, having ventured to try some fried acorns which smelled ever so good, could not help making a wry face.

Supper was soon over, and then Mrs. Bushy said that Maia and Rollo might go up the tree, which was much the same as if they had been invited to go out and take a stroll in the garden. She said that she was obliged to clear the table and wash the dishes, and Father Bushy did not feel able to leave his arm chair, but her nine young ones would lead the way.

Now began the real fun of the afternoon. A short flight of steps, like a little ladder, led them to the outside of the tree. The nine Bushys scampered on ahead, squeaking and chattering in the greatest good humor, and on and up they all went.

For a moment or two, when Maia and Rollo found themselves standing on a branch very near the top of the tree, though they found it wide enough to be comfortable, they felt giddy and frightened.

"How dreadfully high up we seem!" Maia said. "Rollo, how very much smaller we must

have grown! The trees never seemed so high or so huge before. It makes me dizzy to look up or down."

"I think that we will get over it presently," Rollo answered her. "Look at the Bushys. Isn't it fun to watch them?"

And Maia forgot her fears in watching the nine young squirrels. No tight rope dancers were ever half so nimble. They swung themselves up by the branches to the very top of the tree, and then in an instant—flash—there they were ever so far below where the children were standing. And in another instant, like brown streaks, up they were again, darting here, there, and everywhere, so that the whole tree seemed alive.

When they had worked off some of their spirits, they squeaked for the children to join them and Maia and Rollo did so at once. They were used to the tree now, and looked almost as nimble as the Bushys as they held to the squirrels' paws and tails, jumped, scrambled, and slid up and down. Fancy the fun of swaying on the tip top branch of a big tree safely, for there were nine in a circle ready to catch them if they slipped, and then, hand in paw, to dance round the trunk holding on to the rough bark! Then, the sliding down the

tree, like a climber on a trapeze! The Bushys had a way of twisting themselves around so as to avoid the sticking-out branches which was great fun. When suddenly, in the middle of it all, a little tinkling bell, like that on the harness of the godmother's ponies rang, they were sorry at the interruption.

"Goodbye, and thank you," Rollo said, and "Goodbye," said Maia, wondering if they should offer to shake paws with the squirrels.

But before they had time to decide, "Quick," said a voice behind them, which they could recognize as the same which had urged on the ponies. "Slide down the tree." So down they slid, giving a glance upward to see the nine Bushys sitting in a row on a branch, each with a pocket handkerchief and weeping copiously.

"Up the path to the right," the voice said, and as Maia and Rollo took that way there was a different look to the trees; they were much less close and thick than in the Bushys forest. The children were again their own size. They were, all at once in the home path.

A dream, or a real visit, whichever it had been, what fun!

THE GREAT SEA-SERPENT

THERE was a little sea-fish of good family —the name I cannot remember. He had eighteen hundred brothers and sisters, all of the same age. They could not remember either their father or their mother. They just had to take care of themselves and swim about.

They had plenty of water to drink, the whole of the sea, and they did not worry about food. That always came of itself. The sun shone down upon the water, and lighted it up around them. It was a clear, great place filled with the most enormous creatures with great mouths which could have swallowed the eighteen hundred brothers and sisters. But they did not think of that either, for none of them had been swallowed yet.

But as they swam about, doing their best and thinking about nothing, there sank from above right into the middle of them, with a frightful noise, a long heavy thing that did not seem to stop coming. Longer and longer it stretched itself, and some of the little fishes were squashed, and some of them were

bumped. Fishes and snails, everything that swims noticed this dreadful thing, this immense, unexpected sea-eel, which had so suddenly come from above.

What was it? We know what it was. It was the great, leagues-long ocean cable which was being laid between Europe and America.

A pair of sea-cucumbers were so frightened that they lost their stomachs out, but they still lived, for they can do that. Many lobsters and crabs came out of their good harness, and had to leave their legs behind them. Among all this fright and commotion, the eighteen hundred brothers and sisters got separated from each other, and never met again, or knew each other. Only about a dozen remained together, looking round about, up and down, and seeing there in the depths the terrible thing that had so frightened them. It lay along the bottom of the sea as far as they could spy. It was very thin, but they fancied that it could make itself thick if it wanted to. It lay very still. but this, they thought, was due to its cunning.

It came down from above. Up above would be the best place, then, to get news about it. So the fishes swam up to the surface of the water, and there they met a dolphin. He was a kind of acrobat, a vagrant of the sea who can

turn somersaults on the surface of the water. He had no eyes, so they got no information. The dolphin only thought of himself and his somersaults. He said he had seen nothing and was then silent, and looked haughty.

The little fishes spoke next to a seal, who had just then dived. It was more polite, although it ate fishes. But it was just then full, and it knew a little more than the dolphin.

"Even if it is thin," said the seal, "it is undoubtedly the sea-serpent. It will soon come to itself and get its old thickness and bigness. I have never seen the sea-serpent, and never believed in it, but now I am sure that you have seen it," and the seal dived.

"We could swim down and investigate," said the smallest of the fishes. On the way, we could get the opinions of others."

"I won't make a single stroke with my fins to find out anything," said one of the others, and they all turned about.

"But I will," said the smallest, and set bravely off into deep water, but it was a long way from where the mysterious thing lay. It had not gone very far when it met a young whale, frightfully big.

"Don't swallow me," said the little fish, "I

am not even a taste, I am so little, and it is great fun to be alive."

"What are you doing down here, where your family never comes?" asked the whale. And so the little fish told about the long, wonderful eel or whatever it was, that had come down from above and frightened even the most courageous of the inhabitants of the sea.

"Ho, ho!" said the whale, sucking in so much water that he had to send out a huge spout of it when he went up to the surface for breath. "Ho, ho! that must have been the thing that tickled my back as I turned myself the other day. I will investigate it. I have nothing else to do."

So the whale swam forward and the smallest fish behind, but not too near, for there was a tearing current where the big whale shot through the water.

They met a shark and an old saw-fish. They, also, had heard about the strange sea-eel, so long and so thin. They had not seen it, but they wanted to. And then along came a cat-fish. "I will go with you," she said, "If the great sea-serpent is no thicker than an anchor rope, I shall bite it through with one bite," and the cat-fish opened her mouth and showed that she had six rows of teeth.

"There it is!" said the whale, "I see it."

He thought that he could see better than the others, but he had made a mistake. It was only an immensely big conger-eel, several yards long, which approached them. They spoke to it about the new eel, and asked if it would go with them to investigate it.

The conger-eel was willing. "If that eel is longer than me," said the conger, "there is going to be trouble."

"That there will be!" said the others, and they hastened forward.

But just then something got in their way, a wonderful monster, bigger than all of them put together. It looked like a floating island, which could not keep itself up. It was a very old whale. Its head was overgrown with sea-plants, its back was thickly set with creeping things and so many oysters and mussels that its black skin was quite covered with white spots.

"Come with us, old one," they said, "a new fish has arrived, and we are after him."

"I would rather lie where I am," said the old whale. "Let me lie. Please excuse me, I have some sort of illness."

"Rubbish!" said the shark, and they started on without him.

At last they came to the place where the cable lay. It had a long lair on the bottom of the sea, from Europe to America, right over the sand banks, the wilderness of sea plants and whole forests of coral.

"There lies the beast!" said the little fish. They saw the cable, whose beginning and end lay beyond the range of their sight. It lay without moving, but life and the thoughts of men were in it just the same.

"The thing is cunning," said the young whale, "It is quite capable of hitting me in the stomach, and that is my tender spot."

The conger-eel laid itself down beside the cable, and stretched out as far as it could. "The thing is longer than I," it said. "Are you fish or plant, or are you only something from above, dropped down by mistake among us?"

But the cable answered nothing.

"Will you speak, or be snapped up?" said the shark, and the little fish repeated this, "Answer, or be snapped!"

But the cable paid no attention. It had its own thoughts. It was full of thoughts.

"On it! On it!" shouted the cat-fish, and showed all her teeth.

"On it! On it!" said the sword-fish, the whale and the eel.

They hurled themselves forward, the cat-fish first, but just as they were going to bite the cable, the saw-fish, by mistake, drove his saw with great force into the back of the cat-fish. That was too bad, for the cat-fish had no longer the strength to bite. Then there was great commotion down in the mud. Big fishes and little fishes, sea-cucumbers and snails ran into each other, mashed each other, and squashed each other. The cable lay still and did its work as it ought to, but the fighting went on.

Then came an old sea-cow. Men call her a mermaid. This one had a tail, two short arms to paddle with, seaweed in her hair, and she was very proud of her appearance. And the sea-cow explained to them that the whole cause of their trouble, which did not say a single word for itself, was only an invention from the dry land.

"Fit for nothing!" decided the others, all but the smallest fish. The little fish had its own thoughts. "The long, thin serpent is perhaps the most marvellous fish of the sea," it said to itself. "I have a feeling that it is."

THE HISTORY OF DOCTOR WANGO TANGO

OLD Doctor Wango Tango had a long red nose, and old Doctor Wango Tango always wore green clothes; and Old Doctor Wango Tango lived by himself, all alone. When he went out to ride, he sat astride of a steed all skin and bone.

Old Doctor Wango Tango also had a cat, and old Doctor Wango Tango let her sleep in his hat. And old Doctor Wango Tango wore a big red cloak and he had a long pipe, like the bill of a snipe, which he used to smoke.

Old Doctor Wango Tango had a dog also; and old Doctor Wango Tango had a tame black crow. And old Doctor Wango Tango called his thin horse, Sam. His dog's name was Towser, and his cat's name was Mouser, and the crow's name was Flippity Flam.

Old Doctor Wango Tango lived on a biscuit a day, and old Doctor Wango Tango got quite light this way. And old Doctor Wango Tango gave his animals no meat, though it sometimes came to pass that they found a little grass, but nothing else to eat.

Now old Doctor Wango Tango went out one day to ride, and old Doctor Wango Tango had Towser running by his side; and old Doctor Wango Tango had Mouser sitting behind, and Flippity Flam flew around old Sam. Such a party you would seldom find!

As old Doctor Wango Tango rode to the top of a hill, there old Doctor Wango Tango met a wind, high and chill. Away blew old Doctor Wango Tango! Away blew his thin horse, Sam! Away blew Towser and Mouser! And away blew Flippity Flam!

THE STORY OF LITTLE BLACK SAMBO

ONCE upon a time there was a little black boy, and his name was Little Black Sambo.

And his mother was called Black Mumbo.

And his father was called Black Jumbo.

And Black Mumbo made him a beautiful little Red Coat and a beautiful pair of little Blue Trousers.

And Black Jumbo went to the Bazaar and bought him a beautiful Green Umbrella and a lovely Pair of Purple Shoes with Crimson Soles and Crimson Linings.

And then wasn't Little Black Sambo grand?

So he put on all his fine clothes and went out for a walk in the Jungle. And by and by he met a Tiger. And the Tiger said to him, "Little Black Sambo, I'm going to eat you up!"

And Little Black Sambo said, "Oh, please, Mr. Tiger, don't eat me up and I will give you my beautiful little Red Coat."

So the Tiger said, "Very well, I won't eat you this time, but you must give me your beautiful little Red Coat." So the Tiger got poor

Little Black Sambo's beautiful little Red Coat, and went away saying, "Now I'm the grandest Tiger in the Jungle!"

And Little Black Sambo went on, and by and by he met another Tiger and it said to him, "Little Black Sambo, I am going to eat you up!"

And Little Black Sambo said, "Oh, please, Mr. Tiger, don't eat me up and I will give you my beautiful little Blue Trousers."

So the Tiger said, "Very well, I won't eat you this time, but you must give me your beautiful little Blue Trousers." So the Tiger got poor Little Black Sambo's beautiful little Blue Trousers, and went away saying, "Now I'm the grandest Tiger in the Jungle."

And Little Black Sambo went on, and by and by he met another Tiger, and it said to him, "Little Black Sambo, I'm going to eat you up!"

And Little Black Sambo said, "Oh, please, Mr. Tiger, don't eat me up, and I'll give you my beautiful little Purple Shoes with Crimson Soles and Crimson Linings."

But the Tiger said, "What use would your shoes be to me? I've got four feet, and you've got only two. You haven't got enough shoes for me."

And Little Black Sambo said, "You could wear them on your ears."

"So I could," said the Tiger, "Give them to me and I won't eat you this time."

So the Tiger got poor Little Black Sambo's beautiful little Purple Shoes with the Crimson Soles and the Crimson Linings, and went away saying, "Now I'm the grandest Tiger in the Jungle."

And by and by Little Black Sambo met another Tiger, and it said to him, "Little Black Sambo, I'm going to eat you up!"

And Little Black Sambo said, "Oh, please, Mr. Tiger, don't eat me up and I will give you my beautiful Green Umbrella."

But the Tiger said, "How can I carry an umbrella, when I need all my paws for walking with?"

"You could tie a knot in your tail and carry it that way," said Little Black Sambo.

"So I could," said the Tiger, "Give it to me and I won't eat you this time." So he got poor Little Black Sambo's beautiful Green Umbrella, and went away saying, "Now, I'm the grandest Tiger in the Jungle."

And poor Little Black Sambo went away crying, because the cruel Tigers had taken away all his clothes.

Presently he heard a horrible noise that sounded like G-r-r-r-rrrrrrr," and it got louder and louder. "Oh, dear!" said Little Black Sambo, "there are all the Tigers coming back to eat me up! What shall I do?" So he ran quickly to a palm-tree and peeped round it to see what the matter was.

And there he saw all the Tigers fighting and disputing as to which of them was the grandest. And at last they all got so angry that they jumped up and took off all the fine clothes and began to tear each other with their claws, and bite each other with their great white teeth.

And they came, rolling and tumbling, right to the foot of the very tree where Little Black Sambo was hiding, but he jumped quickly in behind the umbrella. And the Tigers all caught hold of each others' tails as they wrangled and scrambled, and so they found themselves in a ring around the tree.

Then, when he was quite a little distance away from the Tigers, Little Black Sambo jumped up and called out, "Oh, Tigers, why have you taken off your nice new clothes. Don't you want them any more?"

But the Tigers only answered, "Gr-r-r-rrrrr!"

Then Little Black Sambo said, "If you want them, say so, or I will take them away." But the Tigers would not let go of each others' tails, and so they could only say, "Gr-r-rrrrr!"

So Little Black Sambo put on all his fine clothes again and walked off.

And the Tigers were very, very angry, but still they would not let go of each others' tails. They were so angry that they ran round the tree, trying to eat each other up, and they ran faster and faster, until they were whirling around so fast that you couldn't see their legs at all.

And still they ran faster, and faster, and faster until they all just melted away, and there was nothing left but a great big pool of melted butter round the foot of the tree.

Now Black Jumbo was just coming home from his work, with a great big brass pot in his arms, and when he saw what was left of all the Tigers he said, "Oh, what lovely melted butter! I'll take that home to Black Mumbo for her to cook with."

So he put it all into the great big brass pot and took it home for Black Mumbo to cook with.

When Black Mumbo saw the melted butter, wasn't she pleased!

"Now," said she, "we'll all have pancakes for supper!"

So she got flour and eggs and milk, and she made a huge big plate of the most lovely pancakes. And she fried them in the melted butter which the Tigers had made, and they were just as yellow and brown as little Tigers.

And then they all sat down to supper. And Black Mumbo ate twenty-seven pancakes, and Black Jumbo ate fifty-five, and Little Black Sambo ate one hundred and sixty-nine, because he was so hungry.

FUNNY JACK

ONCE upon a time, long, long ago in merry England there lived a poor widow and her only son, Jack. Now, Jack was a well meaning boy, but his eyes were always on the sky and the larks instead of upon the ground where they should have been. And Jack was a heedless lad, but funny for all that.

"Jack will never be of any use in the world," sighed the villagers.

And was he of use? Well, just you wait and hear!

It was a fine day in spring and Jack, who should have been at home digging the garden, was off on a jaunt through the pretty lanes. And who should he meet up with but a kindly disposed farmer, who gave Jack a penny. Jack started for home as fast as he could go with the penny held tight in his fist. "Look, Mother, what I have brought you," he shouted as soon as he came to the garden gate. But, oh, when Jack opened his fist there was no penny there.

"How did you bring home your penny, son?" asked Jack's mother.

"So, in my fist," said Jack.

"Ah, that was where you were wrong," said his mother. "When you bring home a bit of money like that you should carry it fast in your pocket."

"All right, Mother," Jack said. "I'll mind me of that."

Well, it happened that shortly after that, Jack was again out in the lane, and who should he meet up with but the dairy maid of the farmer who had given him the penny. And she, seeing Jack for a merry faced, good looking boy, gave him a nice round cheese from her basket to take home to his mother. "Carry it carefully, lad, for it is fresh," said she.

"I will, and thank you kindly," said Jack, remembering a part of what his mother had told him, and with that he stuffed the cheese tight down in his pocket and started off home.

The day was warm, and Jack loitered a bit on the way. When he reached home, where was the cheese?

"What is this you have done to your fine, clean clothes, son?" asked his mother looking at the melted cheese running down Jack even to his toes.

"I brought you a nice, fresh cheese, Mother," said Jack.

"Dear me, Jack," said his mother, "Don't you know that when you bring home a freshly made cheese, you should stand it on your head and then make haste on the way?"

"All right, Mother," said Jack, "I'll mind me of that."

Well, it happened that a little while after that, Jack met up with the same pretty dairy maid who had given him the cheese, and she, liking his looks again and his pleasant manner of speaking, gave him a jug of creamy milk. "Carry it carefully, lad," said she, "for it is brimming full."

"I will, and thank you kindly," said Jack.

He thought of what his mother had told him, but not all, so he set the jug of milk upon his head, and off he ran home. The jug tipped and rolled about, and the milk poured down Jack's neck and into his ears. There was scarcely a drop left in the jug when he came home. The milk was all on himself.

"What have you done to yourself now?" asked his mother.

"I brought you a jug of rich, creamy milk, Mother," said Jack.

"Dear me, Jack," said his mother. "Don't

you know that when you bring home a jug of milk you should come slowly, with the jug held tightly in your two hands about the neck of it?"

"All right, Mother," said Jack. "I'll mind me of that."

Now it happened that Jack went for a walk shortly after that, and he found a little gray cat near a barn. "She will grow into a fine mouser," he thought. "I'll take her home to Mother."

So Jack remembered what his mother had told him, but not all. He gripped the cat by her neck, and holding her so he went slowly home. But, ah, the cat was dead when he got there.

"Poor puss!" said his mother, "why did you bring home a dead cat, son?"

"To catch mice," said Jack. "She was alive when I started."

"Dear me, have you no wits?" asked his mother, well nigh out of patience with Jack. "Do you not know that you should tie a string to an animal and lead it gently behind you along the road?"

"All right, Mother," said Jack. "I'll mind me of that."

Well, in a few days, Jack went to market,

and the butcher, knowing his mother for a poor widow, gave Jack a leg of mutton. "It will make a tasty pot full," he said. "Take it home carefully."

"I will," said Jack, "and thank you kindly."

So what did Jack do but tie a string to the leg of mutton and drag it home slowly in the road behind him. When he came home there was naught left but the bone.

"What is this, son?" asked his mother.

"A leg of mutton I brought you," replied Jack.

"Now I know that you have no wits," said his mother, looking at the dusty bone and the string. "Don't you know that the way to bring home a fine piece of meat like that is on your shoulder?"

"All right, Mother," said Jack. "I'll mind me of that."

Well, one day not long after that, Jack was made a present of a little donkey. "Two of a kind," said the man who gave him the donkey, "and I don't need it."

"The very thing for Mother," said Jack. "I'll make her a small cart and this donkey will draw her to church on Sunday."

He felt very much pleased with himself.

"Take it home carefully," said the man, knowing how the donkey could kick.

"I will," said Jack, "and thank you kindly," and with that, what did he do, but lift the donkey upon his shoulders.

This was more than the donkey could stand. He began to bray and kick, and kick and bray. He was a hard load, but Jack, thinking he was doing his mother's bidding, went on; and the farther he went, the more the donkey kicked.

It happened that there was a sad little princess living in the castle just beyond the village. Never had she been able to speak, and no one could tell why, or what ailed her. The king, her father, had sent to the uttermost ends of the country for doctors, and they all said the same thing, that they couldn't help the princess in spite of the half of his wealth the king offered for her cure.

There she sat in her high window, looking out at the flowery lanes, the sunshine, and the larks, and not saying a word, or smiling. At least, until she saw funny Jack coming along with the donkey on his back.

Then, how the dumb little princess laughed! And she couldn't stop talking as she pointed at the funny sight and called all her ladies to see Jack, too. "Whom is she talking about?"

asked the king. "No matter who he is, bring him in, and give him half of my riches."

So Jack and his donkey were brought into the castle, and Jack was made rich and important. "I'll carry this gold home to Mother," he told the king."

"No, you had better let me," said the princess, which was really the safer way.

LITTLE DAME DOT

LITTLE Dame Dot was a wee old woman—the wee-est old woman you ever saw. She was so little, and so thin, and so light that it did almost seem as though you might give her a ride on a feather. And you would never dare draw a deep breath in the same room with her, for fear that the draft from it would blow her up the chimney.

Little Dame Dot was quite alone in the world, and her sole comfort and care were a pair of bright knitting needles. These, the good towns-folks said, were never out of her hands except on Sunday, and even then she kept her fingers in motion from mere habit, though her eyes were intently fixed on the minister through the entire service.

At other times, sitting or walking, silent or talking, morning, noon, and night, little Dame Dot was always knitting. If she had knitted all her stitches in a straight row, they would certainly have reached around the world. But she knitted round and round for stockings, and

up and down for blankets, and back and forth for mufflers—clickety, clickety, clack.

Whenever little Dame Dot walked abroad, she carried her knitting with her, and in windy weather all the people would say, "Little Dame Dot will surely blow away!" But she didn't, and she didn't, until nobody really thought that she would, or that anything of the kind would ever happen to her.

But once upon a time, when the wind blew, and blew, and blew, something did happen.

Little Dame Dot took her walk and her knitting, thinking of nothing but the gray yarn and the shining needles, although all the breezes were out playing tag with the leaves and the sticks and the papers on the walks, and slamming doors and windows in people's faces. A little breeze took her off her feet the minute she appeared on her door-step; but it set her down all right, and off she went saying to herself and to her needles; "One, two, seam. One, two, three." And the needles went clickety, clickety, clack.

Just as little Dame Dot reached the white church with the tall spire, a stronger breeze than the others caught her up in its airy arms and, quick as a wink, it carried her up into the sky and out of sight, needles and all, ex-

cept the ball of gray yarn which she let drop in her hasty flight.

Soon after, down the street came little Billy Baker. "What *ever* is this?" he said as he tried to pick up a ball that was flying along on the street like mad, all by itself.

"Whatever *is* it?" asked fat Tommy Tubbs, coming home from school with a slate in one hand and a green apple in the other.

"What*ever* is it?" chimed in Polly Plopps, going by in a red cape, with her skirts all a-flutter.

"It's a *ball* of yarn!" said Billy.

"It's a ball of *yarn!*" said Tommy.

"It *is* a ball of yarn!" said Polly.

"*Where* is the end?" asked Billy.

"Where is the *end?*" asked Tommy.

"Where *is* the end?" asked Polly.

Then all the other boys and girls came along, and the men and women from round about to see what Billy and Tommy and Polly were talking about.

"See! See!" said somebody, pointing up to the steeple. And there they saw a little speck, like a very small cloud, way up in the sky.

"It is little *Dame Dot!*" said Billy.

"It is *little* Dame Dot!" said Tommy.

"It *is* little Dame Dot!" said Polly.

"So it is," shouted the crowd, "and this is her ball of yarn."

"Let's wind her down," said Billy.

"Yes, wind her down," said Tommy and Polly and the crowd.

So some of them pulled, and some of them wound, and little Dame Dot grew bigger and bigger, and came nearer and nearer until at last everyone could see her knitting away the same as ever, and as if one of the queerest things in the world had not just happened to her. Pretty soon they could hear her say; "One, two, seam. One, two, three." Then she touched the ground, made a low courtesy, and thanked everbody and told them how kind they were. After which she walked off home still counting to herself; "One, two, seam."

Billy Baker said, "*Well,* I never!"

Tommy Tubbs said, "Well I *never!*"

Polly Plopps said, "Well, *I* never!"

And the crowd said, "WELL, WE NEVER!"

Then Billy Baker spoke, "Something must be done, or little Dame Dot will blow away again some day and never come back, and whatever should we do in the village for blankets?"

"And mittens," said Tommy.

"And garters," said Polly.

"AND STOCKINGS," said the crowd.

"Why not put weights on her?" somebody suggested.

"Oh, yes, we will put weights on her," everybody shouted.

And they did. Never since that windy day has wee Dame Dot ventured abroad without one little iron weight hung from her neck, and two little iron weights tied to her elbows, and three little iron weights sewed to her petticoats. And she knits, one, two, seam; one, two, three. And her shining needles go clickety, clickety, clack.

THE OBSTINATE WEATHERCOCK

HOW did the ship happen to be up there among the mountains? That no one could say; but everybody could see it upon the school house belfry, and everybody did see it.

"We shall have a storm today. The old ship is sailing east," the people would say as they looked up at it. Or, "Fair weather today. The ship is looking westward."

When the bell in the belfry rang the children into school, the ship trembled, but it kept on its course, always in the teeth of the wind. And what was its course? Ah, that is what its captain sometimes wondered.

It was a full-rigged ship, all sails set, and the captain standing at the poop. He always stood there, rain or shine, fair weather or foul, morning, noon, and night, such a faithful captain was he. His hands were in his pockets, and his tarpaulin was cocked on the side of his head. Captain Prim, the children called him. Captain Prim had always sailed this ship. He could not remember the time when he had

sailed any other. It was a long memory, too, that the captain had. He could remember the time when he lived in the same house with a golden cock, a galloping horse, and a locomotive! Where were they now? Gone, no one knew where, while the captain was still sailing the ship. You may believe that he thought none the worse of himself for that.

Captain Prim was always ready to put his ship about whenever he saw a change of wind coming. At the slightest touch on his bronzed cheek, he would sing out: "Haul away on the main sheet! Belay there!" And round the ship would come, and the captain would look straight ahead and be ready for the next tack.

Whither was he bound? Ah, that is the question. You could not have got it from the captain, but I will tell you. Although he looked so sturdy and ready, deep down in his brave little heart was the captain's secret—he wanted to get out on the open sea. It vexed him to be always in sight of land. He couldn't get away from the hills and mountains all about him, and once in a great while, when there was a fog, he was terribly anxious lest his ship should go on the rocks.

So it was that, day and night, he kept at his post and sailed in the teeth of the wind, for

those were his sailing orders. But one day he was surprised by seeing a small round head looking at him over the deck's rail.

"I say there," said the head, "do you want a passenger?" and before the captain could answer, the stranger had climbed over the rail and stood on the deck, where he stopped and shook himself. "Pretty dusty, eh!" he said.

"Who are you?" growled the captain. "Land lubber! Dusty out at sea!"

"Hear him!" laughed the passenger. "Why, Captain, you haven't started yet."

"When you are as old as I am, young stranger," began Captain Prim.

"When you've traveled as far as I have," interrupted the passenger, "you'll know whether it is dusty or not."

Captain Prim longed to ask him where he had come from, but his pride prevented him.

"Maybe it isn't dusty between here and Colorado," went on the passenger. "Maybe those hills aren't pretty rough climbing. I'm tired of it. I'm ready for a voyage. Pull up your anchor and weigh it. Oh, I know a thing or two about a ship. Just weigh your anchor and see how heavy it is, Captain."

"Who are you anyway?" asked the captain, his curiosity getting the better of his pride.

"I? Didn't you ever see one of my family before? Why, I am a Potato Bug! I've had enough of this country. I want to go abroad."

Just then the wind veered a little bit. "Haul away on the main sheet!" shouted the captain. "Belay there!"

The Potato Bug, not seeing any one at work, poked his head down the hatchway and repeated the order, adding, "I say, mate, the captain wants you up here." But no one answered. "Well, this is a ghostly ship!" said the Potato Bug. "I'm not going to work my passage."

"Belay there!" called the captain a second time as the ship veered round and then stood still again.

"Oh, we're starting now, are we?" said the passenger. "This is more comfortable," and he crossed two of his legs. "But I say, Captain," he began again pretty soon, "we don't get ahead. I've been watching that meeting house and it doesn't move an inch. It ought to. It ought to look as if it was moving. I know something about sailing."

"Mind your business!" said the captain, badly frightened. He, too, had always had an

eye on that meeting house when the wind was in the west, and it had bothered him that he never seemed to get by it.

"Well, I think I will get out of this Flying Dutchman," said the Potato Bug, getting up and climbing over the rail. "I'm a live one, I am. I'm used to getting ahead in the world. You may stay here and sail nowhere if you want to, but as for me—good-bye!" and he dropped over the side.

"He's an ignorant land lubber," said Captain Prim breathing more freely, but not daring yet to look at the meeting house again. He could see the Potato Bug, a distant speck out at the end of the school house roof, and then he was gone entirely. But Captain Prim, now that he was alone, kept firmly at his post. His hands were in his pockets, his tarpaulin was cocked on one side, and he kept his ship head on to the wind. Obstinate fellow!

And what became of the Potato Bug? He had more traveling to do. He thought he would just look off over the roof of the school house and make up his mind where to go next, but it made him dizzy, and down he tumbled to the ground.

Young Mr. McPherson found him there, lying on his back with his feet waving in the air. He was not able to turn over alone.

"That's a fine fellow to study!" said Mr. McPherson. "I'll send him home to the old folks."

But the old folks lived in Scotland, and so the Potato Bug had to travel across the ocean in an envelope. In the darkness of that sealed envelope, he thought of Captain Prim.

"Perhaps he knew what he was about. Perhaps he knew his duty and was doing it," the Potato Bug said faintly to himself. "If ever I go to sea again, I'll go in Captain Prim's ship."

But the Potato Bug never went to sea again. He died of too much travel.

CREAMIE RICE PUDDING TRIES TO BE CHARMING

"DEAR me," said Creamie Rice Pudding, "it is all very well to be good and wholesome, but I would like to be charming for a change! I wonder how it is that the other Desserts do it?" Full of this thought, she put on her things and went over to call on the Ice Creams, who, as everybody knows, are as fascinating as can be.

"What makes one attractive?" said Vanilla Ice Cream, after Rice Pudding had asked her, "Why, being very cold, of course. You must go and sit a little while in our freezer, and then every one will love you."

So Creamie Rice Pudding went and sat in the Ice Creams' freezer until she caught a dreadful cold, but when she came out, shivering and shaking, no one seemed to find her a bit more charming than before.

So she decided that she would go over and call on Mrs. Plum Pudding, whom everybody liked so much, and ask her what to do about it.

"How to grow attractive?" asked Mrs. Plum Pudding, "Why, that is the easiest thing in the kitchen. You must be very hot. I'll give you the chance myself; you may take a Turkish bath in my steaming bag and see if that won't make all the difference in the world in you, my dear."

So Creamie Rice Pudding steamed herself for several hours in Mrs. Plum Pudding's bag. But when she came out, in spite of being very uncomfortable, she was the same, simple Rice Pudding as before.

Quite in despair, Creamie looked at herself in her mirror, and kept on wondering what she could do to make people like her better. After a while she made up her mind that she would go and see the Pies to try and find out in what lay their charm.

"Why do people like the Pies?" repeated Green Apple Pie scornfully. "Why, on account of our crust, of course. Any young Tart could have told you that. No one in Dessertville can hope to be very much liked who doesn't wear at least one crust and possibly two. You will have to get a crust, Creamie," she said, "if ever you want to amount to anything."

"But how shall I do that?" asked Creamie

Rice Pudding, who was feeling weak by this time.

"Get some flour and water and shortening and a rolling board and a rolling pin and make yourself one," said Green Apple Pie, "and then I will fit it to you myself," she added, feeling sorry for poor, simple little Creamie.

So Creamie went down town and bought flour and shortening and a rolling board and a rolling pin, and she went to the brook for clear cold water, and then she made herself a crust which Green Apple Pie fitted to her, crimping it all around the edge. Creamie Rice Pudding went out for a walk, wearing her crust, and feeling that at last she must look very charming.

But she had gone only a few steps before she met Charlotte Russe, who exclaimed, "Creamie, what, in all Dessertville, have you done to yourself? Don't you know that it is no longer considered good form to wear those thick, heavy crusts? All the best of us are wearing soft, fluffy cloaks made of whipped cream."

When Creamie Rice Pudding heard this, she almost dropped right there in the road, but she managed to whisper, "Where can I get a whipped cream cloak, Charlotte? I have

spent almost all I have for this pie crust."

"Dear me," said Charlotte Russe, who had very little sympathy and felt herself above the other Desserts, "I can't tell you, for whipped Cream is very expensive this year. You might be able to find a fairy godmother, my dear, who would give you one, but I can't think of any other way out of your trouble."

So Creamie Rice Pudding, shedding her heavy pie crust coat, set out to find a fairy godmother. She travelled a long time without meeting one. Just as she was ready to give up in despair, whom should she meet but a whole family of funny little brown Raisins trudging along the road, hand in hand. As soon as they saw Creamie they stopped, and the eldest one said,

"Please, do you know of any one who would like to adopt a family of Raisin orphans? We are orphans, and we haven't any home."

Creamie Rice Pudding considered it, but she could not think of any one who would be likely to want to adopt a family of Raisin orphans. She knew that the Ice Creams were too much taken up with keeping cold, and the Puddings with keeping hot. The Pies were too busy designing their crusts, and Charlotte Russe would be afraid that those little brown

Raisins would muss up her whipped cream. But the Raisins looked very tired and forlorn and Creamie had a very soft heart. She finally said,

"I will adopt you!"

When the Raisins heard this, they swelled out with joy to twice their natural size. They all trudged together to Creamie Rice Pudding's house which was shaped like a big bowl and had plenty of room inside. As for Creamie, in the fun of washing the little Raisins, and finding places for them, she forgot all about her great wish to be more attractive. It didn't make a bit of difference to her whether she was liked or not.

But, as a matter of fact, from that time Creamie began to be very much loved. How could she help it, for the little Raisins cheered her and made her so attractive that Creamie Rice Pudding began, from the day she adopted them, to be charming.

PHOEBE ANN, THE PROUD GIRL

THIS Phoebe Ann was a very proud girl! Her nose had always an upward curl. She thought herself better than all beside, and beat the peacock himself for pride.

She thought the earth so dirty and brown that she never, by any chance, looked down, but she held her head so very high that something happened by-and-by.

Her neck stretched up, and it grew so long that her parents were sure there was something wrong. It stretched and stretched, and they soon began to look with fear at their Phoebe Ann. They begged her to stop her upward gaze, but Phoebe kept on in her same proud ways, till her neck became so long and spare it was more of a neck than her head could bear.

It bent to the ground like a willow tree, and brought down the head of this proud Phoe*be!*

Whenever she started a walk to take, the boys would snicker, "Here comes the snake!"

And it got so heavy a load to drag on, she had to push it along in a wagon; a wagon with

four wheels, small and red, was used to carry poor Phoebe's head.

So don't you hold your head too high, or your neck stretch too, by-and-by.

JOHNNY LOOK-IN-THE-AIR

AS he trudged along to school, it was always Johnny's rule to be looking at the sky and the clouds that floated by. But what just before him lay, in his way, Johnny never thought about. So that everyone cried out,

"Look at little Johnny there, little Johnny Head-in-Air!"

Running just in Johnny's way, came a little dog one day. Johnny's eyes were still astray up on high, in the sky; and he never heard them say,

"Johnny mind, the dog is nigh"

What happens now! Bump! Dump! Down they fell with such a thump, dog and Johnny in a lump! They almost broke their bones,—so hard they tumbled on the stones.

Once, with head as high as ever, Johnny walked beside the river. Johnny watched the swallows trying which was cleverest at flying. Oh, what fun! And Johnny watched the round, gold sun going in and coming out; these were all he thought about. So he strode on, only think, to the river's very brink, where the

bank was steep and high, and the waves came rolling by, and the fishes in a row stared to see him coming so.

One step more! Oh, sad to tell, headlong in poor Johnny fell! All the fishes in dismay wagged their tails and swam away. There lay Johnny on his face with his new red writing case.

But, as they were passing by, two strong men had heard his cry; and, with sticks, these two strong men hooked poor Johnny out again.

Oh, you should have seen him shiver when they pulled him from the river. He was in a sorry plight, dripping wet, and such a fright! Wet all over, everywhere, clothes, and legs, and face and hair. Johnny never will forget how it felt to be so wet.

And the fishes, one, two, three, all came swimming back to see; up they came a moment after to enjoy the fun and laughter. Each popped out its little head and, to tease poor Johnny, said,

"Silly little Johnny, look, you have lost your writing book."

They were right as right could be. His case was drifting out to sea.

THE STORY OF THE INKY BOYS

AS he had often done before, the woolly-headed Black-a-Moor, one nice fine summer's day went out to see the shops, and walk about. And as he found it hot, poor fellow, he took with him his green umbrella.

Then Edward, little noisy wag, ran out and laughed, and waved his flag. And William came, in jacket trim, and brought his wooden hoop with him. And Casper, too, snatched up his toys and joined the other naughty boys. So one and all set up a roar, and laughed and hooted more and more, and started shouting—only think,

"Oh, Blacky, you're as black as ink!"

Saint Nicholas lived just close by, so tall he almost reached the sky. He had a mighty inkstand, too, in which a great goose-feather grew. He called out in a mighty tone,

"Boys, leave the Black-a-Moor alone! For if he tried with all his might, he could not turn from black to white."

But, ah, they did not heed a bit what Saint Nicholas said of it. They went on laughing

as before, and hooting at the Black-a-Moor.

Saint Nicholas then foamed with rage; his thoughts would fill another page. He seized on Casper, caught up Ned, took William by his little head. And they might kick and scream and call, but in his ink he dipped them all. Into the inkstand, one, two, three, till they were black as black could be. Just shut your eyes and you can see.

See, there they are, and there they run. The Black-a-Moor enjoys the fun. They have been made as black as crows; quite black all over, eyes, and nose, and legs, and arms, and heads, and toes. Those silly little Inky boys! Because they set up such a roar, and teased a harmless Black-a-Moor.

TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

THEY were standing under a tree, each with an arm round the other's neck, and Alice knew which was which in a moment, because one of them had DUM embroidered on his collar, and the other DEE. "I suppose they've each got TWEEDLE round at the back of the collar," she said to herself.

They stood so still that she quite forgot they were alive, and she was just going around to see if the word TWEEDLE was written at the back of each collar, when she was startled by a voice coming from the one marked Dum. "If you think we're wax-works," he said, "you ought to pay, you know. Wax-works weren't made to be looked at for nothing. Nohow!"

"Contrariwise," added the one marked Dee, "if you think we are alive, you ought to speak."

"I'm sure I'm very sorry," was all Alice could think of to say, for the words of the old song kept ringing through her head like the ticking of a clock, and she could hardly help saying them aloud:

"Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee
Agreed to have a battle;
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee
Had spoiled his nice new rattle.

Just then flew down a monstrous crow,
As black as a tar-barrel;
Which frightened both the heroes so,
They quite forgot their quarrel."

"I know what you're thinking about," said Tweedledum, "but it isn't so, nohow."

"Contrariwise," continued Tweedledee, "if it was so, it might be; and if it were so it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't. That's logic."

"I was thinking," said Alice politely, "which is the best way out of this wood; it's getting so dark. Would you tell me, please?"

But the fat little men only looked at each other and grinned.

They looked so exactly like a couple of great schoolboys that Alice couldn't help pointing her finger at Tweedledum and saying, "First boy!"

"Nohow!" Tweedledum cried out briskly, and shut his mouth again with a snap.

"Next boy," said Alice, passing on to Tweedledee, though she felt quite certain he

would only shout out, "Contrariwise," and so he did.

"You've begun wrong!" cried Tweedledum. "The first thing in a visit is to say, 'How d'ye do?' and shake hands." And here the two brothers gave each other a hug, and then they held out the two hands that were free to shake hands with her.

Alice did not like shaking hands with either of them first, for fear of hurting the other one's feelings; so, as the best way out of the difficulty, she took hold of both hands at once; and the next moment they were dancing round in a ring. And Alice was not even surprised to hear music playing; it seemed to come from the tree under which they were dancing, and it was done, as well as she could make out, by the branches rubbing one across the other, like fiddles and fiddle-sticks.

The other two dancers were fat, and very soon out of breath.

"Four times round is enough for one dance," Tweedledum panted out, and they left off dancing as suddenly as they had begun. The music stopped at the same moment.

Then they let go of Alice's hands, and stood looking at her a moment. "I hope you're not much tired?" Alice said at last.

"Nohow, and thank you very much for asking," said Tweedledum.

"So much obliged!" added Tweedledee. "Do you like poetry?"

"Ye-es, pretty well; some poetry," Alice said doubtfully. "Would you tell me which road leads out of the woods?"

"What shall I repeat to her?" said Tweedledee, looking round at Tweedledum with great solemn eyes and not noticing Alice's question.

"The Walrus and the Carpenter is the longest," Tweedledum replied giving his brother an affectionate hug. Tweedledee smiled gently and began:

"The sun was shining on the sea,
Smiling with all his might;
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
'It's very rude of him,' she said,
'To come and spoil the fun!'

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky;
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
'If this were only cleared away,'
They said, 'it would be grand!'

'If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose?' the Walrus said,
'That they would get it clear?'
'I doubt it,' said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

'O Oysters, come and walk with us!'
The Walrus did beseech.
'A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach;
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each.'

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said;
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat;
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low;
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

'The time has come,' the Walrus said,
'To speak of many things;
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings.'

'But wait a bit,' the Oysters cried,
'Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat.'
'No hurry,' said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

'A loaf of bread,' the Walrus said,
'Is what we chiefly need;
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed.'

'But not on us!' the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue,
'After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!'
'The night is fine,' the Walrus said,
'Do you admire the view?'

'It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!'
The Carpenter said nothing but
'Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
'I've had to ask you twice.'

'It seems a shame,' the Walrus said,
'To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!'
The Carpenter said nothing but,
'The butter's spread too thick!'

'I weep for you,' the Walrus said,
'I deeply sympathize,'
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

'O Oysters,' said the Carpenter,
'You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?'
But answer there was none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.''

"I like the Walrus best," said Alice, "because he was a little sorry for the poor Oysters."

"He ate more than the Carpenter, though," said Tweedledee. "You see he held his handkerchief in front so that the Carpenter couldn't see how many he took; contrariwise."

"That was mean!" Alice said indignantly. "Then I like the Carpenter best—if he didn't eat as many as the Walrus."

"But he ate as many as he could get," said Tweedledum.

That was a puzzler. After a pause, Alice began, "Well! They were both unpleasant characters—" she checked herself, for Tweedledum suddenly seized her by her wrist,

"Do you see that?" he said in a voice choking with passion, and his eyes grew large and yellow all in a moment as he pointed with a trembling finger at a small white thing lying under a tree.

"It's only a rattle," Alice said, after a careful examination of the little white thing. "Not a rattle-snake, you know," she added, thinking that he might be frightened, "only an old rattle—quite old and broken."

"I knew it was!" cried Tweedledum, beginning to stamp about wildly and tear his hair.

"It's spoiled of course!" Here he looked at Tweedledee, who immediately sat down on the ground, and tried to hide himself under an umbrella.

Alice laid her hand upon his arm, and said in a soothing tone, "You needn't be so angry about an old rattle."

"But it isn't old!" Tweedledum cried in a greater fury than ever, "It's new, I tell you—I bought it yesterday—my nice, new RATTLE!" and his voice rose to a perfect scream.

All this time Tweedledee was trying to fold up the umbrella he had just raised with himself in it; which was an extraordinary thing to do and quite took Alice's attention from his angry brother. But he couldn't succeed, and it ended in his rolling over, bundled up in the umbrella, with only his head out. And there he lay opening and shutting his mouth and his large eyes—"looking more like a fish than anything else," Alice thought.

"Of course you agree to have a battle," Tweedledum said in a calmer tone.

"I suppose so," the other sulkily agreed as he crawled out from under his umbrella, "only she must help us to dress up, you know."

So the two brothers went off hand in hand through the wood, and returned in a minute

with their arms full of things—bolsters, blankets, hearth-rugs, table-cloths, dish-covers, and coal-scuttles. "I hope you are a good hand at pinning and tying strings?" Tweedledum remarked, "for everyone of these things has got to go on, somehow or other."

Alice had never seen such a fuss made about anything in her life—the way those two bustled about—and the quantity of things they put on—and the trouble she had in tying strings and fastening buttons. "Really, they'll be more like bundles of old clothes than anything else," she said to herself, as she arranged a bolster round the neck of Tweedledee, "To keep my head from being cut off," as he said.

"You know," he added gravely, "it's one of the most serious things that can possibly happen to one in battle—to get one's head cut off."

Alice laughed, but she managed to turn it into a cough, for fear of hurting his feelings.

"Do I look pale?" asked Tweedledum coming up to have his helmet tied on. He called it a helmet, but it looked very much more like a sauce pan.

"Well, yes, a little," said Alice gently.

"I'm very brave usually," he went on in a

low voice, "only that today I happen to have a headache."

"And I've got a toothache," said Tweedledee, who had overheard the conversation. "I'm far worse than you."

"Then you'd better not fight today," said Alice, thinking it a good opportunity to make peace.

"We must have a fight, but I don't care about going on long," said Tweedledum. "What's the time now?"

Tweedledee looked at his watch and said, "Half-past four."

"Let's fight till six and then have dinner," said Tweedledum.

"Very well," the other said, rather sadly, "and she can watch us—only you'd better not come very close," he added, "I generally hit everything within sight—when I get really excited."

"And I hit everything within reach," cried Tweedledum, "whether I can see it or not."

Alice laughed. "Then you hit the trees pretty often I should think," she said.

Tweedledum looked round him with a satisfied smile. "I don't suppose," he said, "there'll be a tree left standing for ever so far around by the time we have finished!"

"And all about a rattle!" said Alice, still hoping to make them even a little ashamed of fighting over such a trifle.

"I shouldn't have minded it so much," said Tweedledum, "if it hadn't been my new one."

"I wish the monstrous crow would come," thought Alice.

"There's only one sword, you know," Tweedledum said to his brother, "but you can keep the umbrella—it's quite as sharp. Only we must begin quickly. It's getting as dark as it can."

"And darker," said Tweedledee.

It was getting dark so suddenly that Alice thought there must be a thunder storm coming on. "What a thick, black cloud that is!" she said. "And how fast it comes! Why, I do believe that it's got wings!"

"It's the crow!" said Tweedledum in a shrill voice of alarm. And the two brothers took to their heels and were out of sight in a moment.

THE END.